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# HOME LIFE

BY

J. W. DIGGLE, D.D.

Bishop of Carlisle



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**TO**  
**MY WIFE**  
**I DEDICATE THIS BOOK**



## INTRODUCTION

I HAVE written this little book at the request of my former curate and old friend, the Rev. H. C. Beeching, D.Litt., Canon of Westminster, the editor of the series to which it belongs. I can wish for it no better introduction to my readers than the sanction of his editorship, although his sanction by no means implies agreement with all the book contains.

J. W. CARLIOL.

ROSE CASTLE, CARLISLE.



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# HOME LIFE

## CHAPTER I

### SEX

THE temple of home is built on two immutable foundations: the changelessness of sex and the unchangeable benediction of God. The union of the sexes in marriage is both a natural and a spiritual union. It is natural, because in some form, more or less developed, it is found in every department of the animated universe. It is spiritual, because no beings not spiritual can enter into a relationship mirroring the relationship betwixt Christ and His Church.

The fact of sex is of all facts one of the most sublime. It is a fact which in its loveliness and sacredness should be taught to children as an integral element in their highest and noblest education. One of the deepest and worst sources of immorality will be found, on examination, to spring from ignorance of the divine creation of sex and of the awe and grandeur belonging to sex which that creation



implies. Not the knowledge of sex, in its true origin and significance, but ignorance, is the cause of multitudes of our moral woes. The Bible is a plain-speaking guide, and one of its opening principles for the government and elevation of human life is the declaration that the difference between man and woman is a divinely-ordained difference. "Male and female created HE them." Everywhere throughout the Bible the sanctity of sex is emphasised: nowhere is there any shirking, either of the perfidy or the consequent miseries of the violation of that sanctity.

There are well-meaning people who clamour for an expurgated edition of the Bible in the interests of purity. Some twenty years ago an earnest-minded man told me he thought the seventh commandment ought not to be publicly read in the services of the Church. It made children ask inconvenient questions, he said, and put into their heads undesirable thoughts. But when I inquired of him what questions which could do them harm if rightly answered, or what thoughts calculated to lead them wrong? he was unable to give me a satisfactory reply. Children brought up in the Bible's way, the way that teaches the sacredness and glory of sex, and the awful results of tarnishing that glory or profaning that

sanctity, are of all children the least likely to go astray in after life in sensual directions.

The two worst foes of purity are ignorance and false teachings. As the years flow on, and the age of adolescence draws near, nothing in the world can stop young persons from thinking of sexual matters and observing the sexual operations of the creatures around them. What they see and feel stimulates their curiosity. They necessarily ask questions in their own minds, and in their innocence they ought naturally to ask questions also of those they love and trust. It is a good sign, a sign of simple purity, when they ask these questions of their parents: a bad sign, charged with evil omen, if they shrink from putting these questions to their parents and turn, often, alas! secretly, to other quarters for their information. The world is crowded with missionaries of corruption. At the critical hour the Arch-Tempter generally manages to have a fitting agent at hand, stimulating sly curiosity, inflaming the lower nature, and bringing peril to the unsuspecting.

Happy are those children who have been wisely forewarned against these insidious dangers, and blessed are those parents who, having taught their children something at least of the wonder and mystery of their physical nature, its origin from God and its capacity in

due course for the untainted joys of married love, can send them forth to school or the avocations of life with a disgust for low views of sex, and with lofty and pure ideals of the sacredness of their own bodies and of the bodies of all others of both sexes.

I knew a brilliant undergraduate at Oxford, who fell a victim to temptation and into the jaws of an untimely death, whose purity had been protected at home by nothing save the rotten fences of ignorance, and whose life might have been spared from shame, and prolonged into years of bright and happy usefulness, but for the well-meant, but fatal, reticence of those who loved him dearly, whose offspring he was, and who, when he was dying, would themselves have died to save his life, but who, either through want of courage or through false sentiment, had not boldly and nobly spoken in time to arm him against the wiles of the Evil One. There may be occasions when ignorance is bliss, but there is no occasion in morals when ignorance is strength. In all matters affecting purity ignorance is weakness, and knowledge, high and untainted knowledge, is a glorious power.

Besides, in the domain of sex, ignorance, absolute ignorance, is practically impossible. If right knowledge is not attainable, wrong knowledge is ready to hand. If true teaching

is not imparted false teachings will generally be obtained. These false teachings are almost ubiquitous. They abound in newspapers, magazines, works of fiction. They are overheard in course of travel. They stare at us from advertising boards. They flare forth in theatres and music-halls. They are disseminated through the post in pernicious circulars. They tempt from shop windows. They are in many circles part of the social tone. Problem-novels and problem-plays feast on them. They form a large and fascinating part of conversation among young persons. For the great mass of young people of every grade there is practically no escape from them. Now they are clothed in the garb of sport or jest: now in that of a pseudo-serious kind of semi-psychological, semi-physiological speculation. But in some form or other false teachings about sex are everywhere around us. They have even invaded the political arena.

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Draw*

What is the best antidote for them? It is of little use to rail against them, and of less use still to be silent and pretend, like the ostrich with its head buried in the sand, that danger is absent, or at least far away. In all contentions against evil and error the strongest weapons are goodness and truth. It is of the nature of goodness to expel evil from the heart, and of truth to destroy error in the mind. True

teachings about sex are the most powerful exterminators of false teachings, and pure ideals the most relentless foes of corrupt insinuations.

But by whom and at what period in a child's life should these true teachings, these pure ideals of sex, be lifted up and taught? No uniform and specific age for these high communings with children can be definitely or universally fixed. The apt and meet occasion comes at different times with different children, according to the diversities of their temperament and circumstances. But if parents are to their children what parents ought to be, their best beloved and most trusted confidants, a right and fitting opportunity is practically certain, sooner or later, to present itself. In every girl's life, as she approaches womanhood, a golden opportunity is of necessity afforded, and in every boy's life, too, though not by the same kind of necessity; yet I think (and I have taken some pains to glean all the information I could in this matter), with general certainty, a golden chance will be given if his relationships with his parents are affable and loving relationships.

Young boys are fond of talking. A natural and educative curiosity furnishes them with an overflowing abundance of questions on all sorts of subjects sacred and secular, physical,

moral and religious. The mischief is that the persons to whom they ought most freely to unburden themselves, and to whom their prattle would often offer openings for high suggestions of inestimable worth, too frequently suppress their prattle unduly and turn its flow into channels which end in baseness. The old prim adage, "a child should be seen, not heard," contains a grain of truth, but with much admixture of falsehood. Taken literally the adage is both ridiculous and mischievous. For in its literalness the adage would turn every child into a silent statue to be gazed upon, thus suppressing its natural instincts, while at the same time feeding its vanity.

A garrulous child, with unbridled lips, is, of course, an unmitigated nuisance in general society, and through the absence of a right and courteous restraint is a fomentor of its own vulgarity. But the more firmly a child is taught the reverence of reserve in presence of its elders who are strangers, the more freely should it be encouraged to lay bare its mind and heart to its parents, with all the budding versatility of springtime, in the wide and happy liberties of walks abroad and conversations at home.

Innumerable are the wrecks of human life shattered against the prison-bars of an unnatural and unbearable restraint reared by

selfish parents to ward off the intrusions of their talkative children, wrecks of both parental happiness and filial innocence. For when once the way of easy, welcome access to the parent's ear and mind has, by an over-stern discipline, been barred against the child it is seldom opened again by the child, and in after years seldom can be fully opened by the parents, however persistent and pathetic the effort.

If parents, then, are to find golden opportunities for presenting high ideals of purity to their children it is essential that they should neither suppress their children's natural curiosity nor stop too sternly the babbling streams of their inquisitive prattle. It is not to surly, domestic despots that children will reveal their inmost thoughts and desires, but only to easy, pleasant friends; and if true, pleasant friends cannot be found at home, pleasant friends, though often false, will be ultimately sought out of doors.

But where right relationships exist between parents and children, right opportunities for treating of the beautiful and wonderful facts of sex seldom fail to offer themselves. Often unexpectedly, on a sudden, and without a moment's warning, critical questions are asked and the most delicate topics are introduced. It is of supreme importance, therefore, that parents should be on the watch and well pre-

pared to seize the golden moment when it comes. Neglected, missed or, worst of all, spurned, it may never return but be lost for ever.

And what is the only adequate preparation for this critical hour in the unfolding lives of those whom parents so dearly love and whose very existence comes through them from God? There is only one true answer to this supreme question. No books, no information picked up from others, can suffice in that solemn hour. These external helps may aid us, but they are in themselves far from enough. None can teach purity so sweetly as the pure. Purity taught as an exoteric doctrine is as different from purity taught by those who have themselves lived it as barren sand is from fruitful soil, or as dry bones from living germs.

Happy are those parents who, when their turn comes to speak to their own children, can call to remembrance the sacred, thrilling hours when their own pure parents spoke to them, and whose days ever since have been linked each to each by the white cords of an unblemished purity. These need have no fear lest whenever the opportunity comes, and with whatever rush of surprise, they will not say the right thing in the right way. In that hour it will be given them by the spirit of purity what to say, and out of the abundance of their own



lofty ideals and clean practice their mouths will speak.

This, indeed, is one of the many felicities of life-long purity—the liberty and exaltation with which, in tones of contagious sweetness, it can speak of purity without overshadowing innocence or leaving any prurient taint behind.

\* As pure bodies are born physically from pure bodies, so pure souls are nourished by pure souls. There is a sacredness in purity which, by a divine infection, is hallowing. To the pure all things are pure, and of all things none more pure than sex. The pure speak purely and with natural simplicity of sex, because to them it is not complicated with reminiscences from which they shrink. They have no need to hide the facts, because in their own lives there has been no such profanation of the facts as shame would seek to hide.

Yet how few lives are both by heredity and personal discipline absolutely pure, and if none save these few could speak to their children wisely and well, what hosts of children would be bereft of timely counsel and inspiration! But this is not the case, any more than the traitorous denials of Peter and the early bigotries of Saul disabled them ever afterwards for an all-conquering faithfulness in the convincing proclamation of evangelical fidelity and liberty.

Continuance, indeed, in wicked practices and indulgence in low tastes and wanton thoughts incapacitates anyone from imparting to others the love of innocence and a passion for purity; but whosoever has learned to hate evil and cherish good, to cultivate earnestly lofty ideals of boyhood and girlhood, of manhood and womanhood, and to carry these ideals into practice, will surely know how to teach their children the sacred mysteries of sex, and to lift the knowledge of these mysteries high above carnal mire into the sweet and holy air of innocence, and of that unspeakable joy which none but haters of evil can ever in its fulness know.

Our own habitual veneration and practice of purity are, then, the best of all trainings for the teaching of purity to others, as they are also the surest preparation for the sudden surprises which the questions of children often spring on us. But if a child's questions be not only sudden, but in their occasion and circumstances inopportune, it is by no means necessary to make answer suddenly. It is better and wiser just to say a few quiet words at the moment, adding, "We will talk, my child, of this again to-morrow." The delay will impress the child and give the parent space for thought and prayer.

But the delay should not be unduly pro-

tracted, for it is while the fire of curiosity is hot that the coals of pure ideals and pure resolves may be most brightly kindled at it. Moreover, a long delay is apt to produce a chilly awkwardness by the operation of suspense. At the earliest opportunity, therefore, let the mother take her daughter, or the father his son, tenderly alone, and speak in simple, serious fashion of the grand and sacred mystery of sex, pointing out its wonderful presence in flowers and trees and birds and other creatures upward to the human race. Tell how by low and vulgar persons the mystery is mocked at and profaned, and by wicked persons perverted into sin, but by all the good and noble is deeply revered. Tell also how sex is not a subject to be talked about promiscuously and at random, but always lowly and reverently, and that as the years go on they will know more and more about it, and that you will some day talk to them again, perhaps several times: but that meanwhile if ever they find there are questions weighing on them you will always be glad to answer them as far as you can.

Even in the first conversation encourage them to ask you questions. Press upon them, too, to think of their bodies as temples of the Holy Ghost. Write on their remembrance the injunction, "Keep thyself pure," and lift

before them solemnly the glorious promise, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Point out the sternness with which the Bible deals with sins against the body, and the happiness it reveals to be in store, both in this world and that which is to come, for the clean, the chaste, the pure. Instil into them a chivalrous regard for those not of their own sex. Warn them that the temptation to violate their purity may at times be very strong, but that if they keep God in all their thoughts He will give them strength to resist or to flee. Warn them against sly boys and familiar girls, and voluptuous conversations and bad books. Encourage them to tell you of their temptations, most of all of their declensions, if unhappily they should be overtaken and fall.

At all costs break down all barriers between you and them: at any risk keep open the avenues of free, full, trusting intercourse. Do all this solemnly, yet with bright manliness and loving womanliness, not with unnaturalness or overstrained timidity. Conclude the interview with a simple prayer, and then proceed to talk of other things.

The beginning of such a conversation is difficult, its anticipation even alarming, but when undertaken in the spirit of prayer and purity, of natural simplicity and parental

tenderness, it grows easier as it goes on, and the restful joy of heart which follows its accomplishment is unutterable. It brings the delight of duty done, of a sense of fonder nearness to our children, of the hope of safety for them amid the temptations of after life. It clothes the first knowledge of the mysteries of sex in the white robes of purity, it extracts the poison from curiosity, it exalts to sanctity the appetites which are so often and so easily degraded into lewdness.

Children are drawn closer to their parents by such confidences. Their parents become to them no longer distant elders, but felt and bosom friends. In a thousand ways the results are beneficial. In after life the bonds woven by sacred confidences like these are hard to break. Children, instead of being drawn away from their parents by the allurements and avocations of the world, are drawn into nearer intimacy at each successive turning-point in their several roads. Those parents who from the beginning have held before their children sacred ideals, even of physical life, generally find in the end that they are a glory to their children.

Of course children greatly differ in temperament; some are inclined to be reserved, even sullen, others communicative and very candid. Some too are more prone to evil than

others, more easily tempted and led wrong on the physical side of their composite nature than others. The same methods of treatment, therefore, are not equally suitable for all alike. Some require much more patience, more persevering watchfulness for the right opportunity than others.

There are few instances, however, in which the right opportunity, if watched for, waited for, prepared for, prayed for, is not at length provided by the child itself; but if not provided by the child it should be created by the parent. No child should be allowed, when approaching adolescence, to go away to school, or to work in the world, or to mix freely with companions of a similar, far less with those of an older, age than itself without having first been warned of the dangers which will beset its life, and inspired with those ideals which are its strongest armour when battling with those dangers.

It is a most shocking cruelty to send children forth from the shelter of home ignorant of the perils and devices of evil, leaving them to pick up their knowledge of these snares anyhow and anywhere, often to their moral contamination and the ruin of their innocence, instead of imparting to them that knowledge which will give them power to stand firm in the evil day, and those ideals which,

by the force of their divine beauty, will put all low and carnal suggestions to a shameful rout.

No valid excuse can be pleaded in justification of the neglect of this paramount parental duty. It is an inherent obligation of parenthood. It is sometimes said that more harm than good may come from the possession of this knowledge. But is this pretext reasonable or true? Sooner or later the knowledge of the mysterious fact of sex must be attained. Is it not better that it should be learned from the lips of pure, responsible love than from any other source? Is it not better to tell children plainly in the sweet sanctity of home what adultery means, that it is the horrible sin of faithlessness to marriage vows, than to leave them to discover this sin for themselves in the vile fascinations of some brilliant book, the wanton conversations of carnal companions, or the sensational newspaper narratives of the divorce court? Is it not better to be bold, as the sacred records of the Bible are bold in their denunciations of vice and their exaltations of virtue, than to be cowardly with a shame that is false and a silence that is deadly?

Multitudes of children in later life have had cause to curse the guilty reticence of their parents, but where is the child who has ever been the worse for having been taught in its adolescence the sacredness of its body, the

divinely-created mystery of sex, the religious duty of controlling its appetites, the tremendous penalties of wicked physical indulgences, the felicities of innocence, the blessedness of purity? Guilty knowledge, indeed, may well seek to hide itself, but when children and parents walk together with God in the gardens of innocent knowledge they will never need to be ashamed.

Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, doctors, clergymen, or elder brothers and sisters, themselves trained in devotion to purity, may sometimes render much assistance to parents in their delicate task; but pure parents are the best, because the divinely-appointed, teachers of purity to their children. A widowed father may rightly turn for aid to his mother or sister or other wise, high-minded female friend in the guidance of his daughters, or a widowed mother to her father, brother or other wise male counsellor in the guidance of her sons—though she herself will generally be their truest and most welcome guide if endowed with wisdom and courage—but under normal conditions the father is the surest and safest of all teachers to his sons, and the mother to her daughters, of the sacred mysteries of sex, and of the relationship of those mysteries to each other, upon which the foundations and happiness of home life have been builded by God Himself.



## CHAPTER II

### LOVE

As the root of home life is the divinely-created mystery of sex, so the food by which that root is fed is the divinely-imparted gift of love. What a sweet and strong potency is love! It is the divinest attribute of man! Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. God is not mind, though all mind is from Him; He is not faith, though all faith centres in Him; He is not hope, though He is the anchor on which all our highest hopes are fixed; He is not righteousness, though He loveth every righteous thing and every righteous person, and all our righteousness is a spark from His righteousness: but He *is* love. All God's attributes find their fulness, all His acts their interpretation, in love.

Right thinking, right believing, right hoping, right doing are all supremely important, but of infinitely greater importance is right loving. The character of our affections is of far higher moment than the colour of our creeds. The

spirits which are the source of evil believe, but they do not love. The bad cannot rightly love. True love cannot dwell in false hearts. Pure love is the greatest of all distinctions between the evil and the good. Without love it is impossible to be God-like. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. They that love best are most like God.

But what is love? Being the very essence of the Infinite, Eternal, All-Holy God it is beyond the bounds of possibility to fathom its depth, or scale its height, or measure its length and breadth. It passeth every limit of definition. It baffles all attempts at delineation. In its vastness it transcends comprehension. What we know not now, in this mortal stage of our human existence, we may, if we are faithful, learn hereafter in future and immortal stages. In our present condition we have no faculties large or strong or clear enough to apprehend, in all its fulness, what love is—the love wherewith God hath loved us and every creature He hath made.

Yet though in our time-state we can never know the fulness of love divine, of love, *i.e.*, in its essential qualities and immeasurable range, yet even now we may learn and, if we will, may enjoy something, however feebly and dimly, of its attributes and felicities. For no truth shines more clearly through the pages of

revelation than the truth that man, notwithstanding all his weakness and unworthiness, is the child of God, created in the divine image and after the divine similitude, redeemed through Christ into a new sonship, a new creation, a new likeness to His Father, and capable, by the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost, of touching at least the fringe of the garments of God, of beholding the reflections of God in the creatures He has made, the laws He has established, the messages He has sent. And so, although the seraphim veil their faces in presence of the essential glory of God, yet is it permitted to man to search without irreverence after God, and to find in the works in which He has been pleased, partially at least, to reveal Himself, the nature of that love in which all His other attributes find their completeness.

It is in the ways and works of God, then, that we can most surely discover the truest traces of the character and quality of love. There is, indeed, another way of accounting for love, at any rate for the mutual affinities of the sexes for each other—the way which traces those affinities through many stages of development; upward from brutish appetite to their moral and social condition in man. It would be idle and false to disclaim man's near relationship, on his physical side, to the

brute creation. In the organs and functions of his body, in his bodily appetites and needs, in his physical pleasures and pains, in the distinctions of sex, man is very closely akin to the animals beneath him. The right result of this kinship surely ought to be to add dignity to brutes and not to subtract dignity from man.

There seems, indeed, great moral grandeur and inspiration in the theory of evolution which considers man as developed, through a countless series of stages, from the lower animals. The gaps in the demonstration of this theory are so vast, the necessary assumptions so tremendous, that the theory is still very far from being clearly and incontestably proved. But, assuming its truth, the theory is magnificently moral. For its essence is the continuous upwardness of the true course of Nature. According to the theory it is this irresistible trend of upwardness which has evolved kosmos from chaos, orderly planets from random elements, beasts from protoplasm, and man from beasts. This trend of upwardness has not only secured the survival of the strongest and the best equipped in the relentless struggle for existence, but in the kingdom of man it has also been wonderfully beneficent, ever creating aspirations and pursuing paths higher than those of antecedent eras.

Thus evolutionary cosmics are inextricably bound up with progressive ethics. The way of order is the way of goodness also. Apart therefore from religion and from all spiritual conceptions of the divine origin of love, it is the bounden duty of every believer in cosmic evolution to inculcate and to practise love in its highest and purest forms, for every human being who lives like a brute, who debases human appetites to brutish levels, is running contrary to the order of Nature, is degrading his species and clogging its beneficent upward tendencies. Such persons drag the wheels of evolution into the mud of reversion. They dishonour Nature, and outraged Nature avenges her dishonour in the debilities and diseases which she inflicts on them and their posterity, her obvious purpose being to wipe these brutalising reversionists out of the path of her progress to higher and nobler types of humanity than those already reached.

In the ordinary course of Nature the penalties attached to the confusion of human love with brutal appetites are relentless and tremendous. If we had no Bible to teach the fact of the necessary dignity and purity of human love, its transcendence above the passions of the brutes, we might learn the fact from modern scientific doctrines. These doctrines, indeed, in their cumulative force

are an august confirmation of the plain and simple precepts of purity enshrined in the Bible. They tell us that when a species has reached a moral level its individual members cannot live immorally without misery to themselves and their progeny, and danger to their kind, and that their individual miseries are Nature's own protection against this danger to the race.

Herein lies part of the scientific solution of the problem of pain. Pain is always connected, either directly or remotely, with some offence against Nature. The offence may have been wilful or unintentional. It may have been an offence committed not by ourselves but by others in whose conduct we are involved. Nature takes no account of these distinctions. Her business is with the species not with the individual. Her rage is excited not against the offender but against the offence. She bids death attend on poison whether the poison be innocently or guiltily administered by oneself or another.

So with the penalties accompanying the degradation of human love, the over-indulgence of appetite, promiscuous indulgence, indulgence contrary to Nature, she inflicts these penalties remorselessly. In her majestic wrath she visits them on generations yet unborn. And this she does, not in anger with

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the individual, but for the preservation of the species and for the ultimate destruction of the hindrances in her upward path.

On this ground, therefore, the ground of conformity to Nature and loyalty to evolution, those who disbelieve in God and put their trust in Nature for the progress of the human species towards perfection should exert themselves to the uttermost to exalt human love to an ever-ascending plane of disciplined restraint and purity of practice.

But for Christians, taught in the school of Christ and seeking to carry into conduct the precepts learned from Him, the obligation to purity is not only an obligation due to the race as a mighty instrument in its progress and elevation, and in the removal of those countless miseries and degradations consequent on impurity, it is also an obligation springing necessarily from the origin of love itself.

True Christians have no doubt in their hearts about the real origin of love. For them all human love, however derived to man, whether mediately by the process of evolution upward or directly as a boon sent down from above, is equally the gift of God, a good and perfect gift, the gift of all gifts, because the gift whereby man is made partaker of the nature of God. To the Christian, therefore,

the defilement of love is, when regarded scientifically, a cause of injury and debasement to his race, and when regarded spiritually the sin of sacrilege, because a sin both against the temple of his body and against the divinity of his spiritual nature.

It is the divine element in human love which distinguishes that love from animal appetite and brutish gratification. By grand and unmistakable signs may all men know and recognise this distinction. Appetite is pleasure for self, love is pleasure for others. In appetite the gratification of self predominates, in love the delight of others. Appetite springs from the lower self, love springs from the higher self. Even when using the lower self as its instrument, true love exalts instead of depraving it. Appetite is altogether physical; by its gross indulgence the moral and spiritual faculties are depressed and deadened. Love is spiritual; its exercise heightens and hallows the whole nature of man.

The sphere in which appetite moves is a carnal sphere, the sphere of love is the shrine of the soul. Love is the great sacrament of humanity; its signs are outward and visible, but its essence is inward and divine. In heaven or earth there is nothing so great as love. In love, of love, and through love are all



things; by love they were created, and for love they are preserved.

No other cause for creation is conceivable, except love, nor any other reason adequate to account for its continuance. Take, for instance, from among all other worlds the world in which we live. Why should God have made it? The only true answer is, "for His own pleasure." "For thy pleasure they are, and were created," says the Bible. But the divine pleasure is the pleasure which finds, as all pure love finds, its satisfaction in the happiness of others. God meant His world to be a world of happy creatures: their happiness was the purpose of His creation, and in the end, at the last, this divine purpose will surely be attained. Though now the world is red in tooth and claw, and marred with the sufferings consequent on sin, happiness is the consummation to which the whole creation moves, and to man has been entrusted a vast and noble part in the attainment of this consummation. For this grand and final goal of God in creation can never be reached till man has learned to conquer selfishness by self-sacrifice, and appetite has been transformed into love.

The cultivation of love, therefore, should be the most steadfast, as indeed it is the highest and most ennobling, of all human pursuits. And there is no nursery for love comparable

to a good home. One of the sublimest and most manifest purposes of the divine institution of home is education in love. Where love is not, home is not. Home has no real meaning apart from love. Without love home is not home. The foundations of all true homes are embedded in the rocks of love. Love is the source of their strength, the architect of their beauty, the perennial spring of their joy. There is neither fear nor fault in love. Love is the bravest and purest of all affections, the sweetest and strongest power on earth.

From their earliest years children should be taught the incomparable loveliness of love and trained in its gracious exercise. Their hearts should be turned away from, their thoughts raised above, whatever is mean and vulgar and selfish and base and cruel, because these things are the destroyers of home love, and their affections should be set towards things true and venerable and just and beautiful and kind and pure, because these things abide in love and nourish the pleasures of home.

One of the greatest supports of love is admiration. Admiration is a universal passion inseparable from human nature. The passion to admire and to be admired are among the strongest passions of the human soul, and, like all other passions, the passion of admiration is capable both of high develop-

ment and low perversion. And the stronger the passion the greater its capacity either for good or evil. The quality of admiration depends on the ideals set before it and the objects it pursues. If the ideal be beautiful, the admiration and pursuit of that ideal will be beautiful also; if the object be base, the admiration of it is also base. To teach and nourish the admiration of lovely ideals and lovely aims in life, to discourage and suppress admiration of all delights and all pursuits not compatible with love, is one of the most glorious prerogatives of true home life.

How many so-called homes are whited sepulchres, gorgeously adorned without but inwardly full of skeletons, because of the wrong bent given to admiration by their inhabitants—the bent towards sensuous beauty, and material splendour, and vulgar fame, and social precedence. On the other hand there are countless homes inglorious without but glorious within, homes poor in material possessions yet rich in spiritual wealth, because the dwellers in those homes have learned to admire the truly admirable, and to win contentment from the sweet and satisfying pleasures which the love of the truly admirable never fails to impart.

Let children then be taught to seek admiration passionately and to bestow it lavishly;

but let them learn what things alone are in their nature admirable, what things are merely admirable in appearance and show, and let them scorn to be admired for any talent or possession which is admirable merely on the surface, and to bestow admiration only on objects really worthy of it. To accept admiration for what is not admirable is false vanity; to bestow admiration ungrudgingly on what is truly admirable is a dear and deep delight.

Admiration, then, rightly guided in early years is a great auxiliary to love. By learning rightly to admire we learn at the same time rightly to love. But rightness of admiration depends not only on the rightness of its individual objects, but also on the extent to which its homage spreads. Extensiveness, as well as intensity, is essential to right admiration as it is to God-like love. God cares for birds and trees and flowers as well as for suns and stars. The sparrow on the house-top and the flower by the wayside are included in His love just as are suns in the heavens or planets wheeling through space. Divine love is incapable of littleness and eschews narrowness.

And all the best human love is like the love of God—it has a universal embrace. Home-keeping youths, it is said, have homely wits. The saying is only true when home is a

straitened enclosure. It is false when home is, as all true homes should be, the centre of a radiating intelligence, the hearth on which the fires of an ever-extending love are kindled. Children should learn at home to love all things great and small; in walks abroad and conversations indoors they should be taught to love all beautiful things in Nature—the products of the earth beneath their feet; the waters in their various forms of dew and stream, of ocean and cloud; the sky above their head with its depths of blue by day and its solemn, star-strewn arch by night.

The lack of largeness in love sometimes spoils the purest of homes, robs them of resource, dwarfs their delights, sterilises their interests. If home is not made interesting it quickly ceases to be the nursery of love. For as life is correspondence with environment, so love is correspondence with loveliness. If this correspondence is limited, love will be weakened and home will lose its attractiveness. Home should be made the least dull and the most interesting place in the world. Whatever contracts true love should be banished from home, whatever expands and enlarges it should be encouraged there. The pleasures of music, the brightness of conversation, the joy in games, the stimulus of thought on current affairs, courtesy in conduct, interest

in each other, the happy companionship of friends, affability in manners, delight in books, simple reality in religion, anything and everything which enlarges and illuminates the sphere of home, it is the duty of parents, according to their ability, to provide for their children.

Interestingness should be their aim, for love dies of dulness. Interestingness is a necessity of the life and growth of love. Interestingness of some sort, not necessarily intellectual interestingness, but always interestingness of heart. It is wonderful how interesting the simplest homes sometimes are, and therefore how fruitful in love; and how dull some splendid mansions are, gilded prisons of the soul, and therefore barren in love.

The cultivation of love, then, is the first desideratum of happy home life. Whatever be the material conditions of home, splendid or simple, if love be its sovereign lord its inmates will be happy, happy in themselves, happy in each other. The life of love is both a beautiful and satisfying life. Where love is there may be sorrow and suffering, but there is also hope and peace. If the loving are miserable it is because of some defect, some declension in the object of their love, some failure in the response to their love, and not because of any default in the nature of love itself.

Even in their disappointments the loving are more blessed than the unloving. For the unloving have neither happiness in themselves nor happiness in others, whereas the loving, though unhappy on account of others, have in themselves the felicities of love. And when their love ascends to God, its primal origin, peace through prayer and rest in faith flows into their souls like a river. Till God forsakes the faithful and turns a deaf ear to their prayers, the loving, however lonely, can never feel deserted, however sad, never in despair.

Nothing is more precious than love. It is above all price. Success, wealth, fame are not to be compared with it. As love is the only sure foundation of home, so home should be the tower by which love is protected, the temple in which love is worshipped. Home is not a human institution, for home is of love, and love is of God, therefore home is divine.

## CHAPTER III

### COURTSHIP

OF all kinds of love conjugal love is, next after love of God, the highest. It has all the attributes of other kinds of love, together with additional attributes proper to itself. Conjugal love is, in its essence, an extension of being. All love, indeed, gives greater largeness to life. I cannot love the beauty even of a leaf, a bird, a flower, a wave, or any other form or thing, without having my own sense of beauty deepened and strengthened thereby. The soul which cultivates the love of the beautiful itself grows in beauty. Similarly with the love of harmony and melody, of sweet and elevating sounds, and combinations of sounds, its influence is dulcifying. On those who cultivate the love of music, *e.g.*, its rewards are wonderful. Music can penetrate the inmost recesses of the soul, can strike its deepest chords with awe and gladness, can lift the emotions on wings of rapture to ethereal realms. The love of the beautiful, whether in form or colour or sound, both beautifies and enlarges the lover. It is as if the good spirit



of the thing I love passed into me, thus adding itself to me, and making me a greater and a better being than I was before.

And if the love of beautiful things is a great enlarger of the soul, the love of beautiful ideals, beautiful truths, beautiful laws, beautiful characters, beautiful beings is a still grander element in the moral magnifying of man. We all are the nobler for every beautiful ideal we follow, every beautiful truth we assimilate, every beautiful law we obey, every beautiful character we copy, every beautiful being we love. By the operation of love their nature links itself with ours, and by slow degrees we are, to some extent at least, transformed into the likeness of the objects we love.

It is this process of transformation which makes the choice of companions of such tremendous importance in human life. The adage, "Show me a man's friends and I will tell you what he is," conveys a two-fold truth. The first is, that we are all inclined to select for companions those of like mind and will, of like temperament and tastes with our own. This inclination is expressed also in the saying that "Birds of a feather flock together." But the adage concerning friends means more than that concerning birds. The companionship of bird with bird has no effect on the character of the birds who associate with one another.

It neither improves nor deteriorates them. It is otherwise with human companionships.

Human companionships always, to some extent, and sometimes to a very large extent, affect character. This is the second truth conveyed in the adage concerning friends; a truth of far greater importance than the first. There are two kinds of companionship. The companionships which we deliberately choose, these reveal our existing character; and the companionships into which we fall, at first perhaps shyly and reluctantly, these reveal, if we persist in them, our future development. The first kind of companionship shows what we are, the second what we shall become.

In the management of home, and especially in relation to children, nothing can exceed the importance of encouraging good companionships and discouraging evil ones. Children must have companions, their instinct of gregariousness renders companions a natural necessity; if companions cannot be found at home they will be sought elsewhere. Parents should not attempt to be the exclusive companions of their children. They should remember that a generation separates them from each other in tastes and interests. Parents think and feel as parents; children as children. In later life parents and children

come to feel and think more alike, and can walk more equally together as friends.

But young children should be encouraged in the making of companionships with others of an age like their own. Their own chosen companions, too, should be made welcome in the home. Very rarely, indeed, are the companions recognised at home prejudicial to children. It is the companions which children have apart from home, whom they never speak of at home, whom they would not like to introduce at home, and who generally would be reluctant to be so introduced, that are so often undesirable and vitiating. But if from the beginning a child's self-chosen companions are made welcome at home, if children are encouraged to speak freely about their companions, if parents ask naturally and kindly, not critically and inquisitorially, about their children's companions, pointing out with evident appreciation the best qualities in them and quietly indicating such qualities as are not worthy of imitation, it will generally be found that children will of themselves in the end drop the unappreciated and cling to the appreciated companionships. Only they should be given time to reflect and act for themselves, and not be hurried too impatiently.

Especially as the years of adolescence draw near ought parents to take every means to win

their children's confidence concerning their companionships, not only in reference to the persons with whom they associate, but also, and more particularly, in reference to the principles on which companionships should be formed. It should be pointed out to them that the laws of friendship are as inexorable as the law of gravity; that it would be as rational to expect a stone to fall from the earth as that friendship with selfish persons should lead to happiness, or with vicious persons to honour.

Friendships, like trees, bring forth fruit after their kind: corrupt friendships, corrupt fruits; good friendships, good fruits. But unlike trees, which bring forth good fruit when a good stem is grafted into a wild stock, friendship brings not forth good fruit but evil, either when a good stem is grafted on an evil stock or an evil stem on a good stock. In friendship if the fruit is to be surely good it is necessary that both stem and stock be good.

This law is most of all strong and sure and invariable in the friendships formed between the sexes. Friendships between the supplementary sexes (for the sexes are supplementary, not opposite) are more influential, for good or evil, than any other friendships. No boy companion can influence another boy as a girl companion can influence him; no girl companion another girl as can a boy companion.

The influence of men upon men is not comparable with the influence of women; nor of women upon women with that of men, when this influence is exercised in the way of personal friendship.

And the more true each sex is to itself, the more powerful and deep its influence is on the other sex. It is not laddish girls who have most influence on boys, nor mannish women on men; far less do girlish boys influence girls, or womanish men influence women. The power of each sex over the other universally declines, and in its declension deteriorates, whenever one sex strives to copy the attributes of its supplement instead of developing its own.

The intellectual, moral, social and, to some extent, spiritual differences between the sexes are as distinct and unchangeable as their physical differences. A woman can no more change her mind and heart and will into those of a man than she can change her body into a man's body. Nor can a man change his psychical nature into that of a woman any more than he can change his physical constitution.

Not only are some of the organs in the two sexes different, but the composition of the blood which flows through every organ and vitalises every function is different also. There is, therefore, a great and indestructible falsity

underlying every attempt of one sex to be as the other; and like all other falsities this falsity will in the end drag miseries, many and grievous, at its heels.

Here is no question of the inferiority or superiority of either sex. Neither sex is of itself either superior or inferior to the other. They are co-equal parts of one unity. Neither is complete without the other. The integer of humanity is the combination of both. In physical strength and continuity of physical endurance the normal man is more powerful than the normal woman; but in physical grace the normal woman surpasses the normal man.

Their intellects also are different. In examinations and the writing of books, in teaching and other forms of intellectual enterprise, each may successfully compete with the other—though perhaps not without frequent risk to health—but it is doubtful whether, except within the limits of strict and unquestionable demonstrations, even the intellectual way of looking at things is the same in both sexes. Certainly the moral, social and religious way is not. The two ways of looking at things, the masculine and the feminine, are like the two eyes of humanity; and humanity will see all moral and spiritual questions more truly by looking at them with both eyes in conjunction

than by looking at them with only one eye, or only one eye at a time.

Whether women should have votes or not, whether the education of girls should be the same as that of boys, whether men and women should compete together in the political and industrial arena, whether there should be no differences in their games and employments, are debatable questions—a great deal may be forcefully said both for and against—but there can be no question whatever that the way of looking at things, and feeling about things, is different in the two sexes, and that the use of both ways is essential alike to true vision and correct sentiment.

The woman is necessary to the man and the man to the woman not only for the continuation of the species but also for the progress of thought, the purifying of motives, the effective uplifting of ever-ascending ideals. From the beginning of human history the necessity of each sex for the other has been constantly growing more clearly manifest. It is a divinely implanted necessity. As surely as the race would perish physically if this necessity were withdrawn, so would it perish morally and spiritually. For the sake of the spiritual progress of humanity not less than for its physical preservation, God has made the attraction of sex for sex the most powerful of

attractions, and its influence the mightiest influence in the world. Without both the similitudes and dissimilitudes of sex home life would be not only impossible, it would be altogether inconceivable.

Home life in its highest forms largely depends on the frank and sacred recognition of this necessity of sex for sex, and the teaching both of the restraints and the gladness which the necessity involves. The happiness of life is vastly concerned in the point of view from which young people have been trained to regard the relations of the sexes. Low views of sex end in low indulgences and all the misery and depravity which low indulgences entail. Lofty views of sex lead on to courtesy, chivalry, and that noble regard of the one sex for the other which is among the most purifying, most exalting, most happy and most hallowing of all the inspirations of human life: its sweetest solace in sorrow, its serenest rapture in joy.

These lofty views should be generously inculcated, these low views indignantly condemned, as part of the home education of children, even young and tender children. No harm, but great good, is sure to follow from these early teachings. Early teachings, I say, because they may, and do, not infrequently come too late to make the deepest and purest



impressions. For when once the soul has been stained by false notions of sex it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to wash the stains away and restore the primal purity. In the battle against impurity nine-tenths of the conquest are won when the eyes of the soul have been opened by early instructions to perceive and desire the beauty and preciousness of the pearl of an unsullied life.

To learn to hate impure words, impure actions, impure books, impure conversations and companions, and to love purity in oneself and purity in others, to rejoice in it, is of all learning the best, the most honourable and true. The reverence for purity is a life-long, a life-giving blessedness.

When the crisis of life comes, and the power of sex is first consciously felt, this reverence is the strongest of all safeguards, the best of all guides. It is then, too, that right teachings concerning the choice and consequences of companionships become of inestimable value. For if the choice of every companion may be tremendous in its consequences, the choice of a companion who hereafter is to be husband or wife is not only tremendous but endless. Hence the duty and the need of choosing well.

Yet in numerous instances how few the opportunities are of regulating choice or

forming sound judgments of the character of these life companions. No doubt there are many cases of true love at first sight, of the sudden meeting of cognate natures and of their melting into each other in the abiding glow of an inseparable union, of men proposing marriage to women who are practically strangers, and of women accepting as husbands men almost unknown, with the result of an ever-deepening happiness in married life.

On the other hand there are countless cases in which such marriages prove dismal, dreary, irremediable failures. Marriage in all such cases is but a kind of lottery, the hazard of a fearful uncertainty, not far removed from gambling.

The prospects of happiness in the marriage of friends, of those we know, whose character we admired, whose conduct we respected, whose principles we trusted before we ever thought of them in relation to marriage, are far surer and brighter than those of marriage with strangers whom we scarcely know, whom we have never seen tried or tested, and who may turn out in reality to be entirely different from what they seem in appearance. For this reason it is surely one of the natural and imperative duties of parents to afford opportunities to their children, as far as lies in their power, of seeing and meeting young people, of

discussing their conduct and character charitably yet with discernment.

If by man is meant humanity in both its sexes, then "the proper study of mankind is man." It is through inattention to this proper study, and the non-acquirement of this inestimable knowledge—the knowledge of the character and principles of those to whom in marriage we commit our destiny—that so many marriages turn out an awful misery.

One of the purposes of courtship is to assist this study and win this knowledge. In those ranks of life in which the limitations of home convenience do not admit of much social entertainment, or in those many instances in which children have left their homes for employment at a distance, and have few or no facilities for otherwise "getting to know each other" (as the phrase runs), courtship commonly passes through the stage of "walking out" before it arrives at betrothal.

And so long as this "walking out" is innocent and pure, and conducted with propriety in all its circumstances, none but those who neither understand nor sympathise with the difficulties of persons so placed will condemn the practice. It commits the young people to nothing. Their mutual freedom is well understood between them. No slur is cast upon either if their walking to-

gether is discontinued. They walk together as friends, and, unless they quarrel, they part as friends, but friends who have learned in their intercourse with each other that, because of some mutual unsuitableness, they cannot and ought not to be anything more than friends. If the result, however, of their walking together, and learning to know each other, is that they grow to respect, admire and trust each other increasingly, then the companionship ripens into a betrothal, the two persons are introduced to their respective families, they are engaged, and in due time are married.

In the industrial classes there are far fewer marriages between comparative strangers, owing to this habit of courtship, than in classes of a higher social rank, and, therefore, far more marriages which turn out happily. The majority of the wretched cases which come into the divorce court are cases in which marriages have been contracted either from motives unworthy, or even base, or else between persons whose knowledge of each other at the time of marriage was meagre and misleading. Marriages seldom turn out unhappily when the contracting parties have adequate knowledge of each other, a knowledge sweetened by mutual esteem and mutual confidence.

Before a marriage can be counted on beforehand to issue in happiness it is essential that it should be based upon mutual respect and mutual trust—respect and trust being prime elements in love. Marriages between strangers may, and sometimes do, as was said, turn out very well, but they are always attended with infinite risk—a risk which is considerably lessened, though not utterly abolished, when the parties have learned to know each other's principles and character previously.

This knowledge is best acquired before betrothal, for that acquired afterwards is neither so full nor free as that acquired earlier. Betrothed persons stand in a special relation to each other; they are naturally on their best behaviour, they are practically powerless to see each other in the clear light of a true proportion, owing to the fascinations of their new-born love and its dear delights. Their food is nectar, their earth is air, their letters, prosy to others, are poems to themselves, their commonplace conversations seem inspired, delicious feelings have all the firmness of facts, desire rather than experience is their guide.

Sweet and glorious is the time when men and women are to each other as gods and goddesses, yet not the best and most trustworthy of all times for persons getting to know

each other as they really are, and as they will assuredly be seen to be in the after days. Besides all this, if, after the announcement of betrothal, such faults of character or unfitness in circumstances should be discovered as to render the hopes of happiness in marriage slender and unsubstantial, it is difficult to obtain emancipation. There is a strong and natural reluctance to take back one's word, to cause pain and distress, to break the bonds of a relationship which at first was so very sweet, to hurt those whom we had begun to love and who still love us, to send forth again as strangers into the world, perhaps alienated strangers, those who for a space have been very near to the heart of our hearts.

All this is a great misery—a misery so great that thousands go forward to marriage rather than bravely face the misery, in the vain fond hope that somehow or other marriage will change the Ethiopian's skin or the leopard's spots. But the sufferings both of broken betrothals and ill-suited marriages might often be averted if proper means were adopted, by the home culture of such companionships, and the recognitions of such pure friendships between the sexes, as would enable young persons thoroughly, and almost unconsciously, to know each other well before they even entertained the expectations of marriage.

There is one great danger which even the intimacies of courtship, and the knowledge which those intimacies supply, appear incapable of inducing young persons to understand and avoid. It is the danger of dreaming—for the belief is the most baseless of all dreams—that faults and vices indulged in before marriage will, after marriage, be repented of and abandoned: that the selfish will become kind, the intemperate sober, the extravagant thrifty, the shallow serious, the pleasure-loving domestic, the wanton chaste, the ungodly religious.

Now and again such blessed transformations have taken place, but their rarity is the rarity of the black swan. To build hopes on a foundation so dangerous is building on sand. Not infrequently faults and vices grow worse after marriage than they were before. If men and women cannot be persuaded to cast aside bad habits for the sake and by the pleadings of those to whom they are betrothed, it is exceedingly improbable that they will be so persuaded after marriage.

If the joys of betrothal and the dread of its rupture cannot wean the betrothed from selfishness and other evil ways, no other influence can. If a man would shrink from marrying a woman as she is, or a woman a man, let them not marry in the hope of what

the other will afterwards become. Such hopes are deadly dreams and the root of the greater part of the miseries of married life.

But if during courtship there are clear evidences of unselfishness, not merely of the transitory unselfishness which is nothing better than a momentary desire to stand well by evincing a readiness to please, but the deep and persistent principle of unselfishness which prefers the well-being and the happiness of others to its own, then if this unselfishness be strong and mutual there is little room for misgivings for the future. There is no truer test of this unselfishness than that of the past life. If young persons have been selfish in the home into which they were born, they will almost certainly be selfish in their married home; if they have been unselfish as sons and daughters, as brothers and sisters, they may reasonably be depended upon to be unselfish as husbands and wives.

Show me the home from which a youth or maiden comes, and tell me what their conduct has been in that home, and I will tell you the sort of home they will make for themselves and the conduct they will practise after marriage. There is no more important discovery that courtship can make than that of the character and conduct of both courter and courted in the homes of their nativity.



## CHAPTER IV

### MARRIAGE

COURTSHIP is the vestibule of the sacred shrine of which marriage is the inmost adytum. There is no relationship on earth, and only one relationship between earth and heaven, comparable to the married relationship. God stands to man in a relation in which He stands to none other of His creatures. God is the Maker of all things and all beings. But of man only is it said, "Thy Maker is thy husband." Very stupendous was the revelation made to prophets of old that God not only made but married man.

In His unsearchable love—a love surpassing knowledge and incomprehensible to belief, although by belief acknowledged with adoring praise—God has taken man into His embrace with all the devotion of a bridegroom for his bride. The infinitude and matchless glory of this love received their supreme manifestation in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who so loved His Church that He gave Himself for it. This giving of Himself, in humiliation and suffering and death for man, is both the proof of God's marriage with man and the ideal

towards which human marriage should aspire. "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved His Church."

Christ's marriage with His Church is the heavenly pattern according to which all human marriages should strive to fashion themselves. The full realisation of this heavenly ideal is entirely beyond our reach and power. "The turning of the ideal into the actual, is a sorry business," writes Carlyle. True. But it is a far more sorry business to be without ideals in life, to be content with the actual, as are brutes, and not to be stimulated with that divine discontent which is one of the noblest of human emotions. There is spiritual success even in the failure to reach an ideal, glory in the shame of shortcoming in the effort. Even when the waggon of life is dragging through the mud it is a delight to know that it is hitched to a star.

Nothing could be more exalting to humanity than the universal acceptance of true doctrines about marriage. Not all the laws which governments could enact, not all the discoveries which research could make, not all the appliances which genius could invent, could compare in their beneficent results with those of the apprehension and exercise of right conceptions of marriage. Very near the root of most of the mischiefs and miseries of the

world—its vices, its luxuries, its idleness, its dissatisfactions, its moral failures and, what are far worse, its immoral successes—may be found low, selfish, sensual views of marriage. True views of marriage are inconsistent with indulgence in selfishness, which is the world's greatest curse.

And yet how seldom even in Christendom the Christian ideal of marriage is lifted up either in conversation or books, in newspapers or sermons, in public or domestic life! False and anti-Christian notions are abundantly propagated. Modern literature is replete with them, so are modern plays. Few parents talk to their children about marriage, except, perhaps, in connection with material considerations. They encourage their children to make "good" marriages; but by "good" they too often mean not good in the sense in which God is good, but good in the worldly sense of goodness.

Those homes are the exceptions, though happily not as rare as is commonly imagined, in which high and noble views of marriage are both taught and practised, in which the first things in marriage are put clearly first. Now the very first necessity in true marriage is mutual and unselfish love—the love which gives itself. Unless self-giving love is put in the first place, and kept there, great happiness in marriage is impossible. After this come

suitableness of temperament and character; those qualities and attributes which alike by their similitude and dissimilitude most easily blend together. It is important also that tastes and pursuits, interests and aims, recreations and hobbies, though not necessarily identical, should at least not be antagonistic. Last of all come material considerations.

But material considerations, though both last and least, are by no means unimportant in marriage. The relationships of marriage are so intimate that nothing whatever which can affect them can be rationally deemed unimportant. It is both foolish and false to ignore, in the contemplation of marriage, the ways and means of livelihood. As it is vulgar and base to marry for money, to make marriage a matter of merchandise, to sell oneself for money, so is it mere sentimentalism to trample out of sight material considerations. Life would be a poor thing without sentiment, but sentimentalism is feebleness. The means of livelihood are necessary to life. Love will not furnish the house, or pay the rent, or discharge the bills. To marry without having made some provision for the future, however simple, is absolutely wrong. More wrong still is it to marry when in debt, or to go into debt in order to be married. It is the strong impatience of desire, not the sweet impulse of

love, which impels persons into these headlong and irrational courses.

However humble the home, let it be yours, and its equipment paid for, before you enter it, else your home will soon cease to be a home and become nothing more than a house, and not even a house in which the goods are yours. An old adage says, "Where poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window." This is not true of honourable and self-respecting poverty, of poverty, however indigent, that owes no one anything. But it is true, very true, of debt. "Where debt comes in at the door, love then flies out at the window." No honest person can be happy in debt. If you are able to be happy in debt be sure there is a germ of dishonour in your constitution. Owe no man anything, except to love one another, is the Christian form of the eighth commandment.

Few things are so closely related to the abundance of joy in marriage as the abhorrence of debt. To be out of debt is at least one of the guarantees of domestic peace; to be in debt a sure source of domestic worry. Thousands of homes which would otherwise have been bright and gladsome have been clouded and blighted by debt. Not a few, both of men and women, have married partners whom otherwise they never would have dreamt of marrying but for

the knowledge, at any rate the hope, which sometimes turns out delusively, that by marriage they would be emancipated from the galling fetters of debt. To such depravity does debt crush human beings down that they will even profane the holy estate of matrimony to rid themselves from its chains. This, however, is only to exchange one set of fetters for another—the fetters of grinding insolvency for those of an unsatisfying marriage.

Young persons should be taught to hate debt; among other reasons for this, that debt is destructive of self-respect and therefore inimical to happiness, and especially to married happiness. In their season of courtship young people should be quite frank about their financial position. They should trust each other perfectly and keep nothing back. Let them tell how much, or how little, they will have to live on, and how they mean to do it. Let them keep no money secrets from each other. Let them discuss how far they can best and most wisely make their store, little or large, to serve them. Let there be no exaggerations, no deceptions. If one of them is tempted to rate the power of a pound at thirty shillings, let the other lovingly dispel the deception. Let them encourage and stimulate each other in sweet contentment with small beginnings, if need be; but let the resolve be

inexorable to begin life together free from debt and to incur no dishonourable debts afterwards.

Nearly all debts are dishonourably incurred. The exceptions in which debt is unavoidable, the result of irresistible circumstance rather than of personal indulgence, are few. Unless some unforeseen and unavoidable calamity occurs, husbands and wives may generally keep out of debt after marriage if at the time of their marriage they have no debts and have carefully adjusted their scale and style of living within the bounds of their income. It is the wilful trespass beyond these bounds which is the cause of the vast majority of debts. As a rule, people run into debt with their eyes open and for things not really needful. Hence the dishonour. And the aggravation of the dishonour is that they commonly do this for reasons altogether senseless—for the sake of appearances, to get into a social set accounted higher than their own, to be peacocks in dress though otherwise crows; in some form or other to appear to be, or to have, what in reality they neither have nor are.

This sin of the idolatry of appearances, like every other sin, is sure in the end to find us out, and to bring its own penalties at its heels. There are few counsels even in the New Testament more wise than that of St. John to the early Christians, "flee from appearances."

If, according to this apostolic counsel, little children from the beginning were taught, both by precept and example at home, to keep themselves from idols, *i.e.*, from false appearances, from vain shows in every form, from egotism and boastful talk, from pretending to be something or somebody other than they are, then in their after days they would be armed against those wiles and snares of false appearances which are among the most subtle and most formidable foes of married bliss.

In this connection another thought should be added. It sometimes happens that, through no fault on either side, the income of a home may be diminished. The wife may have been thrifty, the husband industrious, but there may have been a fall in wages, bad times in business, an unlooked-for shrinking in income. In such instances two things ought clearly to be done: first, the shrinkage ought to be frankly acknowledged at home; and, secondly, there ought to be a re-adjustment of expenditure without delay and fearlessly. It is often hard to do this, and needs the exercise of considerable courage.

If a man has taken to himself a wife on the understanding that his income is so-and-so, if for a while there has been no shrinkage, but perhaps an expansion, and in consequence a certain style of living has been adopted, he



naturally hesitates, when the income is lessened and the need for an honourable retrenchment is manifest, to tell his wife about it. He is afraid of giving her pain, of bringing her "down in the world," of depriving her of the comforts and pleasures to which she has been accustomed.

None the less the duty is plain. To neglect the duty is serious. The neglect raises a barrier—the barrier of a painful secret—between husband and wife. It makes things worse when the inevitable hour strikes and the crash comes. It justly impels the wife to the reproach, "Why did you not tell me of this before and I would have helped you in your difficulties? Why did you keep it to yourself and not trust me? Are we not husband and wife, and if we have been partners in prosperity why not comrades in adversity?"

Such a reproach leaves a sad sting behind, the sting of distrusting and distrust; and although excused and palliated on the ground of well-meaningness, it is an aggravation of the financial exposure when the exposure can no longer be put off. And in many cases the brave telling of the secret has been a renewal of married love. It has relieved the heart of the teller and created the sense of a new trust between husband and wife. Trouble has brought them nearer to each other than they

ever were in joy. Adversity has proved more fruitful in mutual happiness than prosperity.

There is positive pleasure in helping to bear the burdens of those we truly love, in denying ourselves for their sakes. It is in the furnace of trial that souls are indissolubly melted together in one. Not till trials of some sort have been chivalrously endured together can husband and wife ever fathom the deepest, purest bliss of love. It is up the thorny steep of self-sacrifice and sympathetic sufferings that love mounts to the throne of its proper sovereignty.

It was for the joy set before the Christ that He endured the Cross and despised its shame. It is one of the most profoundly mysterious of all truths, yet beyond all doubt a truth, that the way of love is the way of the Cross, and that the way of the Cross is the way of soul-satisfying joy. The sweets of success are earthly, and not comparable to the sweets of suffering, which are heavenly. It is in pangs that the noblest love is born.

We think of a mother's love as more tender, more strong, less destructible than that of a father. Why? Just because of her sufferings in child-bearing. Take away her sufferings and you cut at the root of a mother's devotion. So with all other love. Its pleasures are proportioned to its pains; its pains are the

deep wells from which its purest and most refreshing pleasures spring. Be not afraid, then, of the sorrows of marriage, if those sorrows are the consequence of no fault or vice of yours, but rather rejoice in them, inasmuch as they are the forerunners of a new and greater gladness.

Even if an impending sorrow be of your own making it is better to confess it than to keep it back and make a secret of it. Between married persons there ought to be no secrets, except such as are entrusted to us by others and the divulging of which requires the consent of others. Unshared secrets are great separators of soul from soul. Confession is made unto salvation when made to the person against whom the wrong has been done. And every wrong done by a husband imperilling domestic happiness is primarily a wrong against his wife; and every such wrong done by a wife is primarily against her husband. Whenever such a wrong has been committed the only sure way of saving married happiness is by confessing it.

Let then no wife have secrets from her husband, neither let the husband keep his secrets from his wife. If a wife has been tempted into extravagance, say in dress, and cannot meet her bills with honourable promptitude, or a husband has been tempted into

some rashness or doubtful transaction, let them confess their faults one to another, kneel down in prayer together for pardon, and then will the breach be healed and the joy of confidence restored.

Could the element of secrecy be eliminated from married life, and repentant confession of faults grow habitual, faithlessness, debt, intemperance, and a whole host of other evils would speedily begin to decrease, and in the end would perish. Secret sins are the most deadly as well as the most shameful sins. They are sins which, as Bacon, quoting Montaigne, says of lying, are brave towards God and cowardly towards men. They are sins of unbelief as well as sins of action, and bring the most fearful consequences in their train.

Hence the inspired prayer of the psalmist, "Keep thy servant, Lord, from secret sins," sins presuming to treat God as blind, sins that most of all harden the heart, fix gulfs between soul and soul, and eat like a canker into the very essence of marriage. For those husbands and wives who resolve together to forsake all secret indulgence, to commit no faults without confessing them, married happiness will be both delicious and secure.

Even in small matters the habit of connubial confession is good. No one should be more ready than husbands and wives to say to each

other, "I am sorry." One of the happiest marriages I have ever known was between two exceedingly sensitive and easily irascible persons. Their tempers were very quick and hot. But on the day of their marriage they made a pledge to each other "never to let the sun go down on their wrath," but every evening to ask each other's forgiveness if their evil temper had triumphed over them. The result of this confession was two-fold. The prospect of it strengthened them to resist in the moment of temptation, and the making of it took away the poison of the fault.

The New Testament says nothing about confessions to third parties, or to persons outside the consequences of our faults. It is natural, therefore, that doubts should thickly gather around the value of such confessions. But the New Testament is clear, and so we may be quite clear also, about both the duty and the virtue of confessions to those we have wronged. And in no sphere of life is the healthfulness and the strength-giving of such confessions so conspicuous as in that of marriage.

In the marriage service of the Church of England matrimony is described as "an honourable estate instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and

beautified with His presence and first miracle that He wrought, in Cana of Galilee, and is commended of St. Paul to be honourable among all men, and therefore is not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly or wantonly, to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understanding, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God."

These words are golden caskets containing jewels of priceless truth. Every word is weightily charged with wonderful meaning. Marriage is declared to be honourable, innocent, the earthly sign and counterpart of the mystical union betwixt Christ and His Church. It is a holy estate, an estate so holy that Christ singled it out for the occasion of His first miracle. His apostles commended it. Marriage implies, indeed, a bodily union; the twain become one flesh.

But it is not the bodily union of brutes. It is the union of love, not lust; the union of soul and spirit not less, but more, than of body. All true marriage is the marriage of soul with soul, and spirit with spirit, as well as of body with body; a union reverent and complete, and never rightly undertaken except in the fear of God. How honest and noble this teaching of the Church of England in the marriage service is! It is founded on the New Testa-

ment. Nothing is kept back, and nothing needs to be kept back. To the impure all things are impure, even the words of Scripture itself. But to the pure all things are pure; even bodily appetites.

All human appetites in themselves, and as God imparted them to mankind, are innocent. It is only by excess and lawlessness that they are turned to guilt and shame. Hunger is innocent, but gluttony is sin. Thirst is innocent, but drunkenness is sin. Sleep is innocent, but sluggardliness is sin. Marriage is innocent, but fornication and adultery are sins, horrible and brutish sins. And young people should be warned against them, as against all other sins, straightforwardly and earnestly. They should be taught to hate them with all their mind and soul and strength.

In the name and on the plea of delicacy on these subjects what havoc is daily wrought! Truth is never indelicate. The occasion and manner of conveying it may be, and often are, indelicate and injurious, but truth itself is always pure, pure as the heavenly source from which it flows.

All truth is liable to perversion, both by the teacher in his delivery and by the taught in their reception of it. But if the teaching of all truth were to be forbidden through dread lest teachers, by error or bad handling, should teach

it wrongfully; or learners, through the force of an evil disposition, should wrest the knowledge to their destruction—what would become of truth? It is no more reason against teaching and using truth, that truth is sometimes mistaught and abused, than it is against using dynamite in quarries that anarchists prostitute its power in assassination.

So with marriage. If right and pure teachings on any subject are important for young people it is this. The absence of healthy and holy teachings opens the floodgate to teachings both unhealthy and unholy. In face of the appalling horrors now menacing the physical and moral well-being of the nation through the ravages of impurity, the brutalising of innocent appetites, the secularising of marriage, the arrest of child-bearing, silence seems not far removed from sin.

No doubt right teachings about marriage may be so unwisely given as to be calculated to do more harm than good. No doubt also the art of delicate expression is not attainable by all parents. They shrink in consequence from the attempt to do their duty in these sacred and difficult matters through fear lest they should inflict moral injury on their children. In such cases, when the fitting opportunity comes—and let it be eagerly and earnestly watched for—parents may wisely



and profitably read the marriage service of the Church of England right through with their children, and urge them to read it for themselves. In that service there is nothing incompatible with Scripture, nothing offensive to a pure and reverent delicacy, nothing contrary to fact, nothing which young persons on reaching puberty ought not to know; no knowledge which can possibly do them harm, but much knowledge and many ideals which, if reverently received, will preserve them from fearful evils and do them great and lasting good.

The causes for which matrimony was ordained are thus enumerated in the Anglican form for its solemnisation: (1) It was ordained for the procreation of children, to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of His Holy Name; (2) It was ordained for a remedy against sin and to avoid fornication; that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body; (3) It was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity. Again I say clear and pure words such as these are like jewels set in gold; they are words of health and holiness, of serious warning and glorious inspiration. To consider their purport even in outline is to

consider some of the deepest and grandest principles of human life.

(1) The procreation and nurture of children. Parenthood is one of the most beautiful and wonderful of natural instincts, a most powerful incentive to unselfishness. It is the instinct which most conspicuously debrutalises the brute and raises it, for a season at least, to a nobler level. Parent birds will feed their offspring before feeding themselves. In protection of their young the most timid creatures grow brave and fearless; in their nurture of their young the most wild and ferocious beasts grow gentle and kind. Nothing so brightly kindles the sparks of intelligence and worthfulness in brutes as the parental instinct, with its accompanying desires and duties. Wherever found it is an instinct with a strong lifting power in it.

There is something very mystical and awe-inspiring in this power of what is sometimes thought to have a touch of degradation in it, to produce even in the lowest creatures an impulse of lofty feeling, and for a period to compel even the most selfish animals to practise unselfishness. No passion which can lead even temporarily to self-denial and self-sacrifice can in its essence be ignoble.

In humanity this passion of propagation finds a wide sphere and noble scope. Base

indulgences may defile and corrupt the passion, covering it with shame and obloquy. But in itself the passion is a wonder to be revered. For it is something deeper and higher than the hot instinct of self-continuation and self-multiplication. In itself and its gratification it is physical, but on it as a foundation are built up the splendid fabrics of fatherhood and motherhood, and all the moral strength and beauty which the existence of those fabrics implies.

This evolution of the moral from the physical, at any rate this intimate connection and interdependence of the moral and physical natures in man, is overflowing with significance of vast and measureless import. It raises man's body into a moral realm, imparting to its appetites and functions a moral worth. It forges an irrefragable link between right physical conditions and right moral standards. It establishes a close relation between man's body and his conscience; a relation not less close than that between body and mind. Not only clear thinking, but true feeling, depends on honouring the body. Debase the body, and intellect and conscience alike will be blighted and stunted. This inter-relation of ethics with physics receives striking illustration in human parenthood. The basis of human parenthood is physical—oneness of blood—but the struc-

ture reared on this basis is grandly moral; so grand as to reach to sublimity.

Moreover, in many ways human parenthood, though founded in animal appetite, is wholly distinct from animal parenthood. Animal parenthood makes but brief claims on the unselfishness of animals. A few weeks or months, sometimes a much shorter period, exhausts the claims and cares of animal parenthood. The dependence of animal offspring on their progenitors is short. Their young speedily learn to feed and take care of themselves, grow independent, become strangers, often turn into deadly foes and prey on each other.

All this separating process is natural in animals, but unnatural in mankind. The period of utter dependence in human infancy is protracted. The human infant is years before it can provide for itself even physically, and further years are needed before its mental and moral and spiritual training are sufficient to warrant its independence.

Human parents and their children can never, except guiltily, become strangers to each other. If the term either of filial tenderness or parental devotion is brief, such brevity is contrary to nature. In the true course of nature the bonds between parents and children grow sweeter and stronger with the procession

of the years—the capacity of children to win their own livelihood interferes not with the deepening of their mutual love—and after death has burst the physical bond the spiritual union remains intact.

Such was the first glorious course for which matrimony was ordained. It was ordained to create relationships unspeakably tender and precious through time, indestructible by death, endless as eternity. Sad, indeed, and deserving of all sympathy, is the lot of those whose marriage is disabled, through causes beyond their control, from eventuating in these measureless felicities, and terrible their sin who wilfully sell, for a mess of selfish pottage, the birthright conferred on them by God. For them in childless solitude the bitter time will come when they will find the rejected blessing lost beyond recall, though they seek it carefully with tears.

(2) Secondly, matrimony was ordained for a remedy against sin and “to avoid fornication; that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ’s body.” In the wording of this clause there lingers a trace of mediæval asceticism and its precursor, Manichæism; an underlying assumption that the unmarried state is higher and holier than that of marriage.

For the right understanding of the Prayer

Book in this and some other places a knowledge of its history is necessary. Necessary also is the remembrance that for more than three centuries the Prayer Book has remained practically unaltered and unmodified, and this notwithstanding the fact that those three centuries, and notably the last of them, have been prolific in new ways of thought, new ways of looking at old truths, new values attached to old observances.

The uses and services from which the Prayer Book was compiled were largely the work of monks, one of whose fundamental notions was that the celibate life was essentially purer, higher and holier than the married life, that virgins could be more religious than married women, and monks than married men. Of the perils with which this notion was beset history gives no uncertain account. The authors and editors of the Prayer Book, though some of them married men, had not quite outgrown the Manichæism which lies at the root of these monastic and conventual sentiments. They belonged to their age, and their age was an age of transition, of the birth of new ideas, the acquisition of new knowledge, and in religion of a return to those simple evangelical truths from which, during a long era of more than a thousand years, the Church had been further and further departing both in doctrine and practice.

In such an age it is not surprising that some of the old leaven remained in the Reformation. It is earnestly to be hoped that the happy day yet will dawn when these remnants will be cast out, and the Book of Common Prayer be brought into complete accord with the Book of Divine Revelation.

Meanwhile it is a source of justifiable pride and thankfulness to Churchmen that the Prayer Book runs so wonderfully parallel with the Bible; that its virtues are so many, its faults so few, and that these few faults may without difficulty be corrected by reference to the Bible. Whenever the level of the Prayer Book falls below that of the Bible it is a plain duty to think and act not according to secondary but primary standards. The primary standard in the Church of England is the Holy Scriptures; and the inspired teachings of Holy Scripture concerning continence are higher than those of that clause in the marriage service with which we are dealing. This clause is a kind of extenuating plea for marriage—a plea in the form of a justification rather than an exaltation.

Other parts of the service are sufficiently explicit on the innocence, honour and holiness of marriage; but there is a clear touch of monastic and conventual feeling in the sentence that “such persons as have not the

gift of continency may marry." As if, forsooth, the holy estate of matrimony were an estate intended only for the incontinent; as if in marriage the duty of continence was removed; as if marriage were but a concession to desire, a remedy against sin, to some temperaments a necessary means of avoiding defilement and shame, instead of being the highest of all human estates, the most powerful agent in the development of the noblest emotions of man, the best of schools for the exercise and growth of forbearance and sympathy, the divinely natural state, the state which mirrors the relationship betwixt Christ and His Church with a vividness and fulness of which no other estate is capable.

As was said just now, other parts of the marriage service are the proper commentary and correction of this clause. They jump in unison with the Bible. The Bible, especially the New Testament, which is the climax of the Bible's moral and spiritual revelations, the goal towards which its earlier teachings move, is very clear in asserting the divine institution, the holy character, of marriage.

John the Baptist was the last and greatest of the monastically minded prophets. We cannot conceive of him eating and drinking in social festivals, gladdening and blessing with his presence marriage mirth and marriage



feasts. But, said Christ, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

As far as we know, none of the apostles were unmarried men. Professor Ramsay maintains that St. Paul was a widower. Certainly St. Peter, whom the Papal Church claims as its founder, was married. If passages in the New Testament, such as St. Matthew xiii. 46, and Acts i. 14, are taken in their natural sense, the Blessed Virgin Mary was married and had other children besides her divinely begotten Son. St. Paul in his missionary enthusiasm writes strongly to the Corinthians in favour of the unmarried life, but is careful to qualify his utterances on this subject by the declaration that they are his own personal opinions, and not the commandments of the Lord.

It is on these personal opinions of St. Paul that the clause in the marriage service, now under consideration, is founded both in its wording and reasoning, but it has not the authority of divine inspiration. In the apostolic age, indeed, as in all subsequent ages, strong and good reasons on behalf of the celibate life could be fitly urged.

Men and women can rightly keep themselves unmarried for the kingdom of heaven's sake; to avoid the distracting cares and pleasures, the calls on strength and time, which married life involves; to work in spheres

of charity and mercy and missionary enterprise, unapt for married persons, and the upbringing of children; being spheres of exceptional difficulty and danger. They may rightly abstain from marrying from many other noble reasons: to be free to maintain or comfort their parents in the needs and solitude of old age; to bring up the children of a widowed brother or sister; because they are conscious of a temper or a temperament which can only live happily alone and would mar the happiness of anyone indissolubly associated with it; because of some blighting disappointment or of the indwelling of the spirit of a love passed beyond the veil; or because their means of livelihood are insufficient to justify their marrying, or because they are aware of some taint of blood, some mental tendency, some constitutional weakness which it would be a great wrong to transmit to children.

These and kindred motives are both sufficient and praiseworthy reasons for refusing to marry. But it is the motive which makes the single better than the married life. The single estate is not in itself a higher or a holier estate than the estate of marriage. It may easily be a worse estate. To avoid marriage simply to be free—free from the necessity of daily self-denial and consideration for others, free from impediments and encum-

branches in our movements and pleasures, free to do anything or nothing without consulting anybody or taking anyone else into account—this estate of singleness is obviously an estate morally inferior to marriage, being an estate in which selfishness reigns supreme.

Nor is it certain, indeed, it is very doubtful, whether conventual cell-life—the life of silence and solitude, the life of anti-social devotion, the life of physical austerity founded on the false Manichæan notion that matter, and especially matter endowed with appetites, is essentially evil, that the flesh is not only to be subdued but tortured and maimed, starved and lacerated, in the interests of the soul—is not a subtle form of a most selfish life, the life consumed by an egotistic desire to get one's own soul saved, instead of losing ourselves, as our divine Lord commanded, in the effort to save others.

I do not forget the nobler aspects of much conventual life—its devotion to the poor, its ministry to the sick and suffering, its self-denials and prayers, its magnificent fruitage in literature and art. My present contention simply is that the single estate is neither by nature nor necessity purer or more continent than the estate of marriage—that both estates may be debased or exalted by the motives which govern them—that the estate of celibacy, though not divinely instituted, may be grandly

ennobled and divinely blessed for the sake of the unselfishness inspiring it, and that the divinely ordered estate of marriage may be debased, notwithstanding the heavenliness of its origin, by selfishness and sensuality.

In both estates alike continence is indispensable to happiness. Incontinence spoils marriage as it stains with sin the single state. Very clear and strong are the promises and vows of the marriage service: promises of cherishing love, of honourable respect, of sympathy in joy, of comfort in sickness, of the forsaking of all unlawful indulgences, of single-minded, single-hearted devotion till death.

“With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen,” is a very solemn oath, full of profound yet most practical significance. The ring of gold, round in token of endlessness—a sign of the preciousness and indissolubleness of the bond. The worship of the body—a pledge of the sacred worthfulness of the body, of never-failing respect and reverential delicacy for it. The endowment with worldly goods, whether of rank or possessions—the pledge never to put the wife off with a pittance for herself and her household while reserving the residue of income and wages to spend on luxuries and in-

dulgements. This is the oath of true continence; continence all round; continence in mind (never contemplating the dissolubleness of marriage); continence in body (never forgetting its worshipfulness); continence in estate (never keeping back for our personal indulgences any part of the possessions due to the home).

This all-round continence is the fount from which the purest human happiness, and particularly in married life, most abundantly flows. Continence is by no means an exclusively physical virtue, the control of physical appetite alone. True continence is restraint of every excess. Much immoral incontinence — incontinence of speech and temper and ambition and covetousness in many forms—often accompanies physical continence. But every unrestrained appetite, physical or psychical, is a sure source of misery to others and downsliding in ourselves. Strong restraint is indispensable to sweet delight. Every appetite and passion in man needs training, bridling, subduing, before it can become an elevating force raising him to realms of sunlit joy without a cloud. The incontinent lose control over themselves, and in losing self-control they lose also self-respect and self-reverence—the necessary postulates of sovereign peace and sovereign power.

From their earliest years, therefore, young

children should be taught to love beauty, and undertake the task of self-controlling continence. Continence is the fruitful mother of a fine brood of virtues. Under its wings are fostered kindly consideration for others, chivalry, courtesy, and those serene and tender qualities which make men into gentlemen, and women into ladies, in whatever station of life they are placed. Without continence the wealthiest youth is no gentleman; with continence the poorest maiden is a lady. To the incontinent even marriage itself is a misery.

In the marriage service true emphasis is laid on the preservation of physical continence. Great is the need of this emphasis, for without physical continence all other kinds of continence tend to perish. The physically continent may in other ways be sorely incontinent; but the physically incontinent are rarely continent in any other way. Physical continence, therefore, should form the groundwork of all other continence.

Hence the duty of inciting a devotion to bodily purity in the hearts of the young. The passionate worship of purity is the strongest defence against the assaults of impurity in both the sexes. For purity should be the ideal of both sexes alike. It is intolerable to tolerate impurity in boys and men and to visit it with dire condemnation in girls and women. The

condemnation should be laid, in holy wrath, on both sexes. Impurity is as unmanly as it is unwomanly. In both sexes alike it is gross and filthy sin. In both alike it is abhorrent to God and hateful to all the good.

Materialism may outline a difference, but neither morals nor religion can recognise the outline in relation to the bounden duty of both sexes to maintain their purity with a jealousy that burns like fire. In the form for the solemnisation of matrimony the duty and blessing of continence, the shame and curse of incontinence, are pronounced without distinction between male and female. For if either fails, the other suffers. The purity of each is necessary to the married happiness of both.

(3) The third cause, we are told, for which matrimony was ordained is "the mutual society, help, and comfort which the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity." Mutual society! that is a great part of the meaning and purpose of marriage, the meaning being fellowship, the purpose strength and solace. Modern society is mainly a show, a smart fashion, a delusive appearance, a fleeting unreality, a dancing decoy on a bottomless bog; but true society, how precious it is, how firm and beautiful, one of man's grandest blessings and boons, the fellowship of heart with heart and soul with soul!

All true societies are in their origin divine, a gift from God. A nation is a divine society, so also is a Church; but divinest of all, as most ancient, is the society of home. All societies are intended for human welfare: the nation for the national welfare, the Church for spiritual welfare, the home for the sweetest and dearest welfare that can be known on earth.

Marriage is a companionship more intimate than any besides, the closest, most tender and abiding of all friendships. In the contemplation of marriage this fact of perpetual and permanent companionship should never be lost sight of. Your future wife or husband is to be your inseparable companion. How does the prospect affect you? Does it make you shrink, or does it thrill you with gladness? Is it a burden to be tolerated, made the best of uncomplainingly for the sake of other advantages you expect your marriage to bring? or is it an outstanding element in the joy with which you are looking forward to your marriage?

On the answer to these questions largely depends the character of your matrimonial prospects, more perhaps than on all things else. Hence the unfathomable need of persons "getting to know" each other before they settle on marriage; for till they know each other, both in their agreements and differences, how can they judge whether or not they are



suited to be partners for life, and whether their partnership contains the promise of living, lasting pleasure, or the probability of deadening monotony and increasing, though unconfessed, aversion?

Suitability should be placed in the forefront of all considerations in marriage—real suitability, the twin suitability of the two inner selves for life-enduring companionship. The world has its own notions of a “suitable match,” suitability of age, possessions, station and the like. None of these are, in their degree, unworthy of consideration, but their importance is altogether subsidiary to that of companionship, the companionship of never-failing help and comfort.

However suitable in other respects, a marriage that is not companionable is an unsuitable marriage. Companionableness is a necessary nourishment of love. Love feeds and thrives on it. Without this nourishment even the fires of love are in danger of dying down into ashes. Unsuitableness is often the secret of unhappiness, at least of the want of full happiness, in married life. Even when marriages begin brightly they die down into dulness unless the art of companionship is assiduously cultivated. And there is more need of diligence in the culture of companionship with each other after marriage than before.

Before marriage the opportunities of meeting are occasional and short; afterwards the intercourse is constant and unbroken. It needs, therefore, greater determination and more resource to keep its interest from flagging. But where love is, and the will to please, the tasks of true companionship in marriage are not hard, and with the growing intimacies of time become ever easier and more delightful.

Great are the rewards attendant on the cultivation of the companionable spirit in marriage; the spirit of fellowship, the recognition that it is the privilege, not less than the duty, of the husband to help and comfort his wife, and the wife her husband. Where this spirit reigns, home is the pole-star of life, towards which the needle of all its highest hopes and deepest pleasures irresistibly turns.

When home supplies us with satisfying companionship we are not driven to seek it elsewhere. The husband who is the true helper of his wife never degenerates into a tyrant; the wife who is her husband's comforter never feels herself a slave. The obedience which she vowed in marriage—an obedience which bridal love rejoices to vow—she finds to be the obedience of a glad and happy service; not the obedience of unwilling fear but of free and joyous constraint.

Two chief perils beset the freedom of mutual

companionship in marriage — adversity and prosperity. By adversity is not here meant only, or chiefly, sorrow, grief, affliction, pain. These often soften and bless the married relationship, melting husband and wife together into closer union. Cruel and bad must wives and husbands be who in times of trials such as these do not help and comfort each other.

But when things go wrong, adversely and perversely wrong, in our affairs at home and abroad, when disappointments thicken like a cloud, when events turn out contrary to expectation on either side, a feeling of dissatisfaction and discontent is apt to arise which may break out in temper, or be suppressed silently, even sullenly, so making breaches or barriers in the perfect freedom of companionship. The first beginnings of these separating tendencies should be carefully watched and their growth guarded against, otherwise they will become serious, if not insurmountable, hindrances to complete confidence and companionship. The times when things are going adversely are test-times of love, a great opportunity for the exercise and increase of mutual comfort and help, and if the opportunity be strongly grasped and unselfishly used it will be a fruitful seed bringing forth rich clusters of future trust and joy.

Prosperity is another great test-time of love,

severer perhaps than adversity. "Give me neither poverty nor riches" is a most wise prayer. The extremes of both adversity and prosperity are dangerous to the highest moral and spiritual development. The middle path is both pleasantest and most safe. Extreme adversity crushes the spirit down with cares and chokes the growth of lofty aims and hopes. Extreme prosperity tends to conceit and vanity, to indulgence in excessive pleasure and in materialising luxury—luxury, the destroyer of moral worth and spiritual advancement; luxury, the forcing-house of selfishness, the chill dwelling for unselfishness.

When great wealth comes it is better it should come towards the end of life, when character is formed and principles are strong, and temptation to vanity and luxury has lost some of its force, rather than at the beginning of life before the moral power is sufficiently firm to withstand the snares and wiles of the world, and the spiritual power is sufficiently hallowed to keep close to God even amidst carnal distractions.

This is one reason why prosperous parents may be well content with honourable beginnings in married life for their children on a scale far more limited than their own. It is seldom good for children to begin where their parents left off, if the parents are wealthy.

Some struggle at the beginning, some self-denial, is a great boon to married persons. It draws them nearer to each other; they have a common share and a mutual delight in making their way in the world. Each contributes a part to success and its praise belongs to both.

But whether prosperity comes soon or late in life it is a test-time of love; an opportunity for husband and wife alike to help each other in resisting its worldly influence, and, in resisting, to draw nearer to each other in that inner union which is the heart and soul of married rest and peace and joy.

Such in outline, then, is the character of Christian marriage and the causes for which it was ordained. Civic marriage serves civic ends apart from religion, but civic marriage differs from Christian marriage in several ways. Chiefly perhaps in these: civic marriage is a contract, Christian marriage a status. Civic marriage puts the nation in the forefront, Christian marriage places God there.

In all marriages, indeed, there is a civic element. The Church's benediction does not constitute, nor is it a part of the civil contract in marriage. That contract is made by the troths of the contracting parties in the presence of the witnesses, and afterwards confirmed by the signing of the register. Still, no Christian marriage is merely civic. Christian

marriage receives the benediction of the Church, and if entered upon in the spirit of the solemn and beautiful form prescribed by the Church is entered upon neither for carnal nor purely civic purposes, but in the spirit of holiness and the fear of God.

Another word may be added. There are those who have never had the opportunity of marrying, or, having had it, have not thought it right or wise to avail themselves of it. For these life is sometimes tinged with sadness, the sadness of the heart's deep solitude. Yet in giving self up for others, in the loving tendance of parents, in the care of orphan children, in the nursing of the sick, or in some other form of care for those much needing care, sadness will be saved from turning into sourness, and stars will burn overhead when the feet are travelling through solitary night.

"Marriage is woman's highest vocation," said to me the matron of one of our greatest hospitals, "but as that vocation has not been granted me I have found a glad contentment in working to relieve the sufferings of others." And a brighter face I have seldom seen than hers, or eyes that glowed with a happier light from the inner depths of a strong, beautiful, sympathetic, self-forgetting, self-sacrificing soul.

## CHAPTER V

### HOME EDUCATION

THE best of all schools is a good home. Neither Church nor State can do as much for a child's education as home, when home is interesting and happy. Parents have a larger responsibility for the destiny of children than either teachers or clergy. The office of teacher is a great office, so is that of religious minister, yet neither is so great as that of parent. Teachers and ministers of religion stand outside the child, but the parents' blood is in the child and the child is part of the parent.

Our education controversies are too often about secondary matters. The primary matter in education is home influence. It is bad home influences which so seriously cripple the efforts of the nation to improve the condition of the people. Thousands of teachers have to lament that much of their work in school is made frustrate by the evil influences of home. Ask ministers of religion which are the most promising members of their flocks and they will tell you, "those from good homes."

In religion we begin at the wrong end when we begin with the Church. In education we begin at the wrong end when we begin at the school. Good homes fill churches, bad homes empty them. Good homes make school work effective, bad homes destroy its effectiveness. I asked, several years ago, one of England's greatest schoolmasters, whose pupils were then carrying off an altogether remarkable number of scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge, "To what do you attribute this success?" "I put much of it down to the homes from which my Sixth Form comes," was his reply. It is a matter of common knowledge that a very large proportion of those who have won great distinction in the various departments of service in the State have come from eminently religious homes, particularly from manses and parsonage houses. The battle of Waterloo may have been won in the playground at Eton, but the battle of life, national and individual life, can best be won in the homes of England.

In their sphere schools are indispensable. But what is their sphere? What their proper work? Their proper work is to supplement, not to supplant, the work of home. Schools can rightly supplant homes only when homes are bad. Good schools rightly supplement the work of good homes; but if they attempt to do



more the result is loss. Of all the clouds which menace the future of our nation none seems more black than the growing fashion to over-estimate the power of the State and the influence of the school. There is little hope of a State whose individual members expect it to do for them what they can, and ought to, do for themselves, and little hope for home when it expects the school to do that which itself both can and ought to do.

Nothing short of necessity can justify either school or State in the undertaking of parental responsibilities. Not till home has done all it can should either school or State step in. To step in before is an undermining of the very institution of home, with results disastrous to the nation. But when home has done its most and best there remains a large sphere for the school.

No parent can impart the store of varied information which a staff of competent teachers can. Teaching is both a gift and an art. Few parents have the gift, fewer still have cultivated the art. It is for the benefit of children that they should be taught by trained teachers. The great majority of parents have not time, even if they had knowledge and power, to teach their own children. Besides, children can learn lessons at school in the way of emulation and comrade-

ship out of the power and range of home to teach.

In the magnifying of the importance of home there is therefore no minimising of the beneficial necessity of school. Home is first in educational importance, and school is second, but the right influence of each is necessary to the right influence of the other, and without both the normal child cannot be effectually educated.

As of marriage, so of education, the two greatest foes are immoral poverty and immoral wealth. Neither the immoral poor nor the immoral rich attempt to do their duty by their children in home education. The immoral rich, on a variety of plausible pleas, get rid of their children as soon as they can. In infancy they banish them to the nursery. As soon as they escape from the nursery they pack them off to school. The immoral rich find their children in the way. They are a clog on the wheels of pleasure, a fetter on freedom, a trial to tempers which at best are not good, a strain on nerves, a burden on time, a social interference. And so, excusing themselves on the ground of their children's interests, the immoral rich neglect to lay firmly the foundations of home influence in the lives of their children, to their own and their children's irreparable loss.

Parents who are rich without being immoral, and they are numerous, are often perplexed and troubled as to the proper age for sending their children away to school. But the question is not one of age so much as of fitness, and the age of fitness greatly varies. But this much at least may be safely affirmed, that until the love of home has been deeply instilled into the heart, and the best and holiest principles have been planted there from the parents' lips, and by the parents' example, children are not ready for removal to school from the divinely ordained shelter of home, however well-ordered the school may be. With parentless children, or children whose parents dwell in unwholesome climates, the case is different. For them school is often the best of homes.

The immoral poor, like the immoral rich, are their children's enemies. Their homes are not homes, but dens—dens in which dwell all kinds of indecencies and profanities. In these iniquitous dens children starve and are badly clothed. Having no real homes, the State rightly feeds and clothes these children, though not rightly unless the parents be punished for their neglect of duty and compelled to repay to the State as much as possible of the cost incurred by their neglect.

But large numbers of the poor, as of the rich,

are not immoral. Indeed, considering their surroundings, their privations, the sort of houses they live in, and the wages on which they live, their morality is often magnificent. These moral poor are they who deserve most help from the State, and who would return to the State the surest recompense in the way of home education. The education carried on in these homes is of the highest value. It is education not in learning but in love; not in knowledge but character. Such homes are immense helps to schools; for where character is trained in goodness at home, the teacher's task in school is beyond measure facilitated.

The distinctive purpose of home education is education in character. Of all education, indeed, education in character is the most important. Knowledge is power; but it is power to do evil no less than good. The more knowledge bad persons acquire the worse they become, and the larger grows their sphere of injury and villainy. The clever bad are the worst of the bad. Their wickedness is more subtle, their powers of deception more deadly, their corrupt artifices more fascinating, their victims more numerous.

A stupid and ignorant devil is not half so dangerous as a devil clever and well-informed. The groundwork of education, therefore, must be goodness, otherwise information will be

injurious. The greater the information the worse the education, unless the tree of knowledge is planted in good ground. The aim and aspiration of home education should be to soften the heart, to cleanse and till the field of character, to pluck up the weeds and kill the thorns before the seeds of information are sown by school, and when those seeds have been sown and are growing up, the work of home should be to water them from the wells of moral truth and spiritual virtue.

Not, indeed, that schools should not be training-grounds of character as well as seminaries of information. No school is worthy of the name that does not put training of character before supply of information. The best rewards of the scholastic profession—those which the best teachers most value—are the thankful pride and joy with which they see their pupils growing into good men and good women, adorned with the grace of humility and inspired with the ambition of helping others. This is a more pleasing spectacle to good teachers than long lists of prizes and medals and scholarships and other academic distinctions hanging on the walls of their schools.

The test of the goodness of a school is not the high places won in examinations by its pupils—though these are a source of justifiable pride

—but the proportion of high-principled boys or girls it sends forth. The first of all first-class honours is honour of character. They who wrestle most strenuously for supremacy in character are the true senior wranglers, and the true senior classics are they whose lives are most deeply inspired with the teachings of the most sacred volume in all classical literature.

The work of the school, then, although different from that of the home, is concurrent with it. Home and school are partners in a joint enterprise; the enterprise of producing strong and true characters. When home and school both do their duty the prospects of the nation will grow brighter from year to year. But alas! home often fails to do its part—does no part at all, except wrongly. A greater burden, a heavier responsibility is then thrown on school. It has to do the work of home as well as its own work. It is this tremendous fact that lies at the heart of the question of secularism in education.

If the homes of the nation were all good, religious homes, then the teaching of religion in school might with less danger be eliminated from the school curriculum. Though even then the loss to both teachers and children would be very great, for it is the religious lesson which brings teachers and taught into

closest personal contact. It is the religious lesson which has most of friendship and fellowship in it. It is the religious lesson which brings heart nearest to heart and gives widest, noblest play to the deepest emotions and purest ideals of the soul. It is the religious lesson which counts for most in the cultivation of character. To take away the religious lesson from the day-school is to rob the teachers of their highest prerogative and the children of their most important instruction.

This is true of all schools, but most of all of those attended by children without any home, or any home worth calling home—the children of the abandoned, the profligate, the truthless and the vicious. It is these children which, out of their rags and wretchedness, their squalor and shame, cry out in inarticulate misery for moral help and religious hope.

No voluntary religious ministrations of any kind can cope with these piteous multitudes of little helpless sufferers. If they are to be touched at all by the sacred influences of religion they must be so touched in the day-school. Owing to their numbers, their surroundings and their habits, the healing touch can nowhere else be ministered. Through the agency of the day-school teacher, often their truest, tenderest friend, the person who

knows most about them, and to whom they most trustingly look up, some of these many lost may be saved when no other agency can reach them, or, reaching, move them. To secularise such schools among such children is to cast them beyond the pale of either moral or social hope and to plunge them into spiritual darkness. And to do this in the name of religion is to make religion do the work of irreligion.

While, then, the school should always be a powerful assistant to home in the training of children's character—and the substitute for home where home is not—yet the cultivation of character is the distinctive purpose of home education. The education of character at home has special advantages. It begins earlier; its roots strike into deeper soil; it is going on not within limited hours and amid special surroundings, but always, and in the most common circumstances and the most ordinary relationships of life. No code can prescribe its curriculum. It is education by example rather than precept; though in home education precept has its proper and important place.

Home education differs from school education most of all in this: the principal business of school education, not indeed its most important, yet that on which most time is spent,



is the training of the intellect, the conveyance of information, the quickening of that desire for knowledge, and the cultivation of those habits on which the means of livelihood and the winning of worldly success largely depend. The principal business of home education is not worldly success, but moral victory and spiritual illumination; not livelihood, but life. Home education, while stimulating mental curiosity in conversation and intellectual liveliness in debate, makes its strongest appeals to the heart.

The prime factor in home education is love; true love, not merely the physical instinct of animals for their young but the divine emotion of a moral parenthood. Good parents love their children with the same sort of love, though infinitely less in degree, wherewith the Father in Heaven loves His children. He loves their bodies well, but He loves their souls and spirits more.

Home education begins with the training of the body in temperance, soberness, and chastity. It pays great attention to habits of decency and cleanliness, of neatness and tidiness. It deprecates slovenliness and punishes indecency. To make decency more easy by the better and more comely housing of the poor should be one of the most resolute of the aims of true lovers of the poor.

When whole families, by thousands and tens of thousands, sleep together in one room; the wonder is the results are not worse, though they are at times unspeakably bad. Home education demands appropriate equipment to do its work well as much as school education. Before home education can do its proper work in the cultivation of health and decency and the stoppage of physical degeneracy, one thing needful is better housing with lower rents.

But home education is education of soul and spirit even more than of body. In this work the need of tender, rational, spiritual love is paramount. A child cannot have too much love of the right sort. It can easily have too much of sorts wholly wrong—spasmodic and intermittent love, love dependent on moods for its expression rather than on principles, unequal love, petting and spoiling love. Not a little of what is called kindness to children is sheer and dreadful cruelty. The germs of fine character are often killed by kindness, well-meaning but wrong-headed kindness.

To let a child have its own way, especially if it cries or otherwise makes itself disagreeable to get it, when we know the way is not good, is to inflict lasting injury on the child. It is saving ourselves trouble and unpleasantness at the expense of the child by the indulgence of its obstinacy and self-will—an indulgence

prolific in future misery for itself, its parents, and all who afterwards may have to deal with it. It is training it in the conviction that what it must do to get its own way is to be obnoxious, a conviction leading to irascibility, sullenness, and a whole brood of vices.

Nothing can be worse than letting a child have its own way even in little things, when those things have been forbidden, as nothing can be better than joyfully to give it its way, even at the cost of inconvenience to ourselves, when the way is innocent or shows a desire to be kind.

All true love has an element of sternness in it. The love that cannot hate is not love. Neither is that love, but only feeble amiability, which does not irresistibly burst forth into fires of consuming indignation at dishonour and wrong. The love of God is a consuming fire. Because God is love He is jealous; jealous of the well-being of those He loves; jealous not for His own sake but for theirs, lest they should live unworthily and below themselves. There is a jealousy that is selfish, a brutish jealousy, born of disappointed desire or the dread of it; and there is a divine jealousy, born of a yearning love for the good of the beloved and inseparable from that yearning. So also is there a sternness that is divine and a sternness basely despotic.

There is much confusion between these two antagonistic kinds of sternness. Because bad people are often despotic it is foolishly argued that good people should be passionlessly amiable. This is to argue that because bad people use their strength badly, good people should not use it at all; or that because brutes are ferocious, loving men and women should be imbecile. At any rate the God of the Bible is no colourless, amiable God. Because He is love, He is also fire.

This divine sternness, inseparable from all real love, is an essential element in home education. Parents who are not stern to vice are poor guides to their children in the paths of virtue. And parents who do not punish their children for doing wrong, have mainly themselves to thank if their children's lives prove moral failures. The modern age is immorally amiable in the matter of punishments, being kind to the deliberately and impenitently wicked as well as to those striving to follow after righteousness.

The infinitely gentle Son of Man knew nothing of degenerating kindness such as this. In the sunlight of His heaven always stood the black shadow of hell. He knew nothing of vice without penalties, or wickedness without an attendant scourge. His gentleness to the good was the measure of His sternness

to the evil. Because He loved the temple courts He drove forth its profaners with thongs.

“Whom the Father loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” It is fatuity to profess to improve on this divine announcement, or to dream you can best save your child by sparing it from proper punishment. All punishments, indeed, are not good. In punishments, as in so many other things, excellence depends on motive and method. If either motive or method be bad, punishment is bad also. Punishments are only good when both motives and methods are good. All punishments inflicted in temper are bad; so also are all punishments disproportioned to the offence. It is of the essence of remedial punishment that it should be felt to be just by the punished.

As the boy said of Dr. Temple, when head-master of Rugby, “He is a beast, but he is a just beast,” so in punishments by pain the conscience must approve the justice of the pain, else will the redemptive power of the pain be gone. Deliberation and indignation are indispensable elements in right punishment. To punish in haste is penalty without judgment; to punish without indignation is more mechanical than moral.

Of all forms of punishment for boys the least

injurious and the most effectual is flogging, especially for moral offences and in early years. There are other forms of punishment, some good, some bad. Starvation punishments are bad; so also is the practice of "keeping children in" after school hours, or making an increase in home lessons, and "the setting of lines," of which the most obvious result is the ruin of handwriting—a ruin not infrequently averted by the surreptitious purchase of lines written by others. Of moral results these forms of punishments are entirely barren, as are also punishments with the least tinge of cruelty in them, such as standing on one leg or holding up an arm for a protracted period.

For minor offences of carelessness, or untidiness, or unpunctuality, or little outbursts of temper, or small disobediences, or occasional idleness, or petulance and self-will in games and such like, small and short punishments are sufficient, such as an hour in bed, or a meal of dry bread and water, or standing with the face to the wall, or the like.

But shutting up in dark rooms and other methods of fright are wicked, as is boxing of the ears and every sudden infliction of pain. If punishment affrights it is bad punishment. Fright is a wholly different sensation from fear. The fruit of fright is slyness; of fear, strength.

The purpose of good punishment is to give birth to fear and to strengthen it. It is in the soil of a reverent fear that true wisdom begins to grow, and grows most richly.

For all moral offences, such as lying, impurity, serious irreverence, profanity, theft, wilful and persistent disobedience, repeated cruelty, incorrigible idleness, obstinacy, ungovernable temper and such like, there is, I repeat, no punishment so effectual and so merciful as a good and just flogging. There is no more degradation in being flogged than in other forms of punishment. Any strong and sensible lad would far rather be flogged than punished "like a girl," as the saying is. For girls should never be flogged, except for the very worst offences, and in their earliest years. There are some boys, too, of a temperament so feminine, so sensitive and shy, that they shrink with deep horror from corporal punishment. For them some other form of punishment should be devised. But for a healthy lad there is no remedy against evil comparable to the rod. Through sparing the rod multitudes of lads are yearly plunged into depths of moral mire.

One of the most brilliant boys I have ever known found himself in prison as a man because his parents refused either to whip him or to have him whipped for an immoral habit

as a child. A large proportion of the boys in the public schools of England get flogged at one time or another in their school life, and of those which escape the majority have probably been well flogged at home before they went to school, and how many of them are the worse for it?

One of the very best public schoolmasters, whose pupils simply love and worship him as their great benefactor—for it is a libel on boys to say they resent or nurse grudges for a good flogging which they feel they deserve—considers flogging so sacred a part of his work that he reserves its infliction for Sunday. A custom easy to mock at, but with true meaning and excellent purpose in it.

Flogging is hard work for parents. It hurts the heart of the flogger more than the nerves of the flogged. It needs strength of parental will and determined courage to flog a child. Indeed, cowardice is one of the causes why parents so often fail in the duty of flogging. They don't like it. It upsets them. They are falsely afraid lest the flogging should erect a barrier between them and their children. Foolish mothers plead against it, and feeble fathers are washed off the path of duty by a deluge of tears. Or other causes prevail—a genuine conviction that flogging is bad, a



shrinking from the ordeal (for ordeal it is) which is insuperable.

Yet home education is often a failure through the neglect of physical punishment, especially in infancy and early years. Early whippings are soon forgotten, though their moral results remain. There are multitudes of men and women whose tempers are under strong control, who are cheerful and not sullen under disappointment, who find great joy in obedience to duty, who are happy in themselves and a fountain of happiness to others, owing to their whippings for temper and mopishness when they were children—whippings which they do not even remember. Because of these unremembered, but benignant, chastisements they grow into good sons and daughters. A reverent loyalty sanctifies their love—a loyalty which beautifies the subsequent relationships of life.

No doubt there are instances in which no punishments are needed to quicken conscience and strengthen the moral fibre, to root out the weeds of selfishness and give the flowers of kindly consideration for others clean soil to grow in—instances in which the child's years are linked each to each by a natural piety.

But instances of a contrary kind are many, and part of true home education is to deal so firmly with them in quite early years as to

emancipate children afterwards from those evil appetites and propensities which if unchecked may lead to untold miseries. A very little wise, yet severe, punishment in the beginning often averts serious sufferings afterwards. Whatever may be said of the vast problem of pain, it is certain that the pain of bodily chastisement is for young children often an angel in disguise.

Again, from their earliest years children should be taught the grandeur of duty and the exceeding joy that flows from doing it. In every home a throne for duty should be uplifted, beautiful and conspicuous. Constant homage should be paid at that throne, homage in word and deed. There is, perhaps, no difference among human lives so deep and distinct as that made by the constant recognition of duty and unswerving devotion to it.

Not our rights, but our duties, are the strongest factor in our happiness. A man may be robbed of his rights yet be at peace in himself, but if he neglects his duty he robs himself of peace and is the plunderer of his own happiness. A man may have all his rights, yea, many more than he deserves, and be miserable and discontented, but he cannot do his duty without receiving the recompense of an inward delight, of which nothing in the world can deprive him.

There is no more important element in home education than assiduous training in the worship and practice of duty. Not "I like," or "I don't like," but "ought I," or "ought I not?" are the words which should be most often heard from children's lips. To put our lives under the dominion of our likings is to put them under the grinding wheels of a tormenting tyranny; to make "ought" and "ought not" our watchwords is to ensure life's freedom and gladness. There is no servitude comparable to slavery to self, no freedom so perfect as obedience to duty. So long as I am allowed to do my duty I can get along in life quite mirthfully and thankfully, without much solicitude about my rights; but unless I feel I am at least trying to do my duty life is a night without a star.

The grandest of all the rights of man is the right to do his duty. At Trafalgar Nelson said, "England expects every man this day to do his duty." In doing his duty the hero fell, but his cause was won. In the ship of life conscience should be the commander, daily expecting each of us to do our duty. In the effort we may fail, but the delight of duty will be triumphant in our hearts, a delight free to the lowliest and worth more than a tomb in Westminster Abbey.

A great part of home education, then, should

be education in duty, education in the love of it, as well as in its discharge. At home, duty should be sovereign lord. Everybody there should feel that everybody else is trying to do their duty. We have no right to expect others to do their duty to us unless we do our duty to them. We ought to do our duty to others whether they do theirs or not to us, but they have no right to expect it. Neglect of duty is moral abolition of right.

If parents, therefore, expect children to do their duty to them, they ought to do their duty to their children. Indeed, the best of all ways of teaching others their duty to us is by doing ours to them. Example in duty is ten times more powerful than precept. If we are slovenly there is little use in telling others to be neat; if we are extravagant, in impressing others with the obligations to thrift; if we are imperious, in inviting others to be considerate and gentle; if we are false, in wishing them to be true; if we are indolent, in expecting them to be industrious; if we are selfish, in looking for the growth of self-forgetfulness in them; if we are haughty and vain, in hoping they will be humble and real.

Our children may learn these virtues from others, they may be attracted by the loveliness of the virtues themselves, or they may even be aroused to effort by the absence of duty

them. Prayer is all the better for play, and play for prayer.

One of the best things that can be done for poor and destitute children is to provide playgrounds for them and teach them how most heartily and interestingly to play in those grounds. The toys and playthings of the rich should never be thrown away. They should be sent to hospitals for sick children and to the homes of poor children. A child's life in which toys have played no part is a pitiful subject for reflection. It is like a morning all clouds without even a peep of the sun.

Sunlight is essential to good home education. In all kinds of health, physical, moral and religious, sunlight is important. Nothing grows well in dungeons except fungi and noisome things. Moral sunshine is as good for the soul as physical sunshine for the body. In religion, too, sunshine is invaluable. A sunny religion is far more attractive and fruitful than a religion of gloom. We sing of the brightness of God's countenance, never of its gloom.

God is sometimes fire, but never gloom. There are times when home should be like a fire burning with indignation and wrath against cruelty and vice; times also when its voices should be very soft and low; times of suffering and sorrow and sympathy; but there is never a time when home should be a morbid or a

melancholy place. The normal atmosphere of home should be sweet and fresh as of the sun-gilded dawn in spring. The air of home should be such as the spirit can most freely breathe, and in which its wings are able best to soar on high.

Even poor homes may be rich in cheerfulness. Cheerfulness is no monopoly of any rank or station in life. The middle station is perhaps the best for its development. Penury is apt to starve it, luxury to kill it with satiety. But it is a virtue far more dependent on the spirit within us than on the surroundings about us. Its life consists in a well-ordered contentedness. The discontented are never cheerful, the contented never without some cheer. The spirit of contentedness is a very high and noble spirit. It is the great peace-bringer and joy-bringer to men. It is the opposite of a low and lethargic indifference.

Contentedness is anything but don't-careness. The truly contented never say "I don't care." The contented care tremendously. But for what do they care? They care whether or not they have done their duty, not whether or not they have been adequately recompensed for doing it. They care most whether they have done their best for others, not whether others have done their best for them. Their anxiety is not to attain some fresh and further

advancements, but to make themselves fit for whatever position they find themselves in, so that they may do excellently there. All the rightly discontented are contented, and all the rightly contented, discontented. The rightly discontented are contented with themselves and their own performances; the rightly contented are discontented with themselves and ever striving to do better and more worthily.

It is part of home education to train children both in content and discontent; a divine content within the soul, largely independent of circumstances and surroundings; a divine discontent irrepressible until we have done our best in whatever we undertake, a discontent with all second-bests of our own, a discontent which nothing short of excellence in effort, even in the least of things, will appease. The habit of always trying to do our best is a soul-satisfying habit. The consciousness of wilfully falling below our best is the secret cause of much discontent. So also is the feeble incapacity to do without things to which we have been accustomed.

To put our happiness under the control of circumstances is to put it on a slippery slope. Circumstances are perpetually shifting. To put trust in them is like planting our feet on a quicksand for stability. If we build our hope for happiness in circumstances and

surroundings, then if these change and decay our happiness perishes with them. It is good to so bring up children that they learn to look for happiness far more within themselves than without.

One great aim of home education should be to supply children with abundant means of interest and resource in themselves. It is the absence or lack of resources in themselves—intellectual, moral and spiritual resources—which makes people bores, bores to themselves and bores to others. The well-educated are never either bores or bored. *Ennui* is a sure sign of both dulness and ignorance. To avert the sleeping sickness of *ennui*, home education should pay much attention to hobbies. A man without a hobby is like a woman without a needle. Some pastime outside our work, some interest outside our trade, is necessary to home happiness.

Home education should be education in the beauties of Nature (flowers, birds, shells, stones and the like), in amusements, recreations, interests and hobbies of various kinds. Do not scold too much if your child does soil its clothes and make a mess in the house with its hobbies and playthings. In home education pleasures are more important than pinafores. There are many worse things in children's lives than dirt. Dulness is one.



Again, children should be faithfully and repeatedly warned by parents never to place the keeping of their character in another's power. One of the terrible effects of sinning with others is that our character lies afterwards at their mercy. At any moment they may betray us and bring us to shame. As children say, "They may tell." The only safety against their "telling" is never to do anything of which we are afraid they should tell. The peace of this safety in after life is incalculable.

For one case of blacknailing which comes into the public courts there are thousands of which no one ever hears. Cases of secret blackmailing, the blackmailing not for money but the pilfering of inward peace through fear of betrayal. It is the sins shared with others in early life which often are the skeleton in the cupboard afterwards. The dread of exposure is an ever-impending cloud charged with disaster and shame. It is the veritable sword of Damocles. It often hangs unseen, a ghostly spectre, above the marriage altar, and mars for ever the serenity of what might otherwise have been a blissful home.

No warning should be impressed more urgently on children than that against the peril of putting their happiness in another's power, and especially by being partakers with

them in sin. At any moment a partner in sin may become the most cruel of foes.

The sweetest and best part of home education is education in spiritual truth. Religious homes are little heavens. God is their sun and shield, and the divine Lamb their light. However poor, their gates are better than pearls and their floors than gold, because all built of love. Angels hover over religious homes. And the more simple the religion of home, the more beautiful and strong it is.

To bring little children into the near and felt presence of Jesus Christ, to persuade them to entrust themselves and all their lives to the blessed arms of His obedience and guidance, to teach them of the Father in Heaven, whose children they are, and who loves them with a love beyond all knowledge, to lead them in prayer for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, to train them in the earthly duties born of this most heavenly love, to show them how to see the light of all life in the light of God, and to teach them that because God loves them they should love all the things and all the creatures He has made—this is the highest ideal to which home education can aspire, and in the pursuit of which the purest and most blessed joys of home are found.

Parents sometimes plead they have not time for these things. Then why are they parents?

To be a parent and yet not to discharge the obligations of a parent is the height of culpability. And of all parental obligations the education of children in high ideals, in the love of virtue and the hatred of vice, in self-restraint and self-reverence, in innocent pleasures and interesting pastimes, in tender and unselfish consideration for the weak and the poor, in courtesy and kindness, in resolute purpose and noble aim, in habits of self-denial and industry, in duty to God and man, is the most binding and most paramount.

Home education is the first of all parental duties, and it can never be right on any plea to place it second. It is a duty incumbent on the father as well as the mother. It is beyond all calculation better to work to make our children happy and good than financially independent or rich. No public duty should take precedence of home obligations. It is the neglect of this elementary order of things that causes the children of public men and public women to turn out in many instances so badly. The claims of home should come before the claims of either Church or State.

It is the sin of Corban to neglect home duties on the pretext of either public service or public worship. Good laws are important, yet not as important as good homes. Give the nation good homes and good laws will follow.

Experience proves that it is those who have first done their duty at home who render most solid public service afterwards. And naturally, for their service is not the service of brilliant debaters, or raw doctrinaires, or ambitious pedants, but of practical persons inspired by unselfish devotion to the public welfare. Having first made their homes happy and good they proceed to try as far as in them lies to make happy and good the community in which they live and the nation of which they form a part. Having first been faithful over their few things they have proved themselves fit to be rulers in many things. Having first done small duties well they have prepared themselves to do great duties well also. This is the true and irreversible order of right service to humanity, to begin at the centre, not at the circumference.

To neglect the duties of home for the mere sake of making money, or indulging in pleasure, or attaining fame, or satisfying selfish desire of any sort, is sin. It is the breach of a most sacred promise, the betrayal of a momentous trust. One great purpose of the divine institution of marriage, a purpose for the fulfilment of which we fervently pray at the time of its solemnisation, is that husband and wife may live together so long in godly love and honesty that they may see their children

Christianly and virtuously brought up to God's praise and honour.

In the daily devotions of parents the spirit of this prayer should never be absent. Often we are weary and languid, often the task seems beyond our strength and fruitless, often we are tempted to transfer to the school the duties we find irksome at home; in such dark hours of impatience and fatigue and failure let fathers and mothers recall their marriage vows, and pray together their marriage prayers, then will new will and strength be granted to persevere in the work of home education, a work whose fruits are better than riches and honour even in this world, and whose blessings will follow both them and their children in the world to come.

## CHAPTER VI

### HOME DIFFICULTIES

HOME difficulties are mainly of two kinds: those beyond our control and those of our own making. Those beyond our control are chiefly, though not exclusively, material difficulties, such as lack of proper accommodation and sufficient means of livelihood. Miserable accommodation and blighting penury are terrible hindrances in the way of the cultivation of domestic virtues and domestic happiness. They make very hard the acquisition of habits of comeliness and decency. They interfere with health. In the struggle for existence insufficient means tend to foster sordid and suspicious views of life. They also bitterly contract opportunities for amusement and recreation. They rob labour of its dignity, perverting it into a detested drudgery. They are apt also to engender a spirit of unbelief in God, of hostility to existing social and political institutions, and of jealousy towards those more highly favoured.

These results of squalid penury make home life exceedingly difficult. In extreme cases,

removable by truer teachings about the honour due to parents, by emigration to the colonies, by the transference of more industries to smaller places, and by the cultivation of small holdings and agricultural pursuits. "The servants' difficulty," too, is by no means wholly of the servants' making. It is largely a masters' and mistresses' difficulty. Servants, like other people, have both their faults and their virtues. They have also much to put up with, both from one another and from their employers, some of whom have stronger instincts for feudal rights than for Christian duties. Besides, many people keep servants who ought not to keep them; people whose means do not justify them in keeping servants, who can neither pay, nor feed, nor otherwise treat their servants rightly, and who ought to do their domestic work themselves. For no one has a moral right to keep a servant who has not means to keep the servant well. Some keep too few servants and expect too much from them. Others keep too many and suffer from the mischiefs which idle hands are ever industrious in doing.

Not till there is more Christian spirit introduced on both sides will the "servants' difficulty" be removed. When on the side of masters and mistresses there is the conviction that their servants are not serfs, but

brothers and sisters in Christ, and on the side of servants the conviction that their service should not be eye-service or tongue-service, but loyalty and thoroughness in all things, the servant problem will largely cease to be a great difficulty in home life. For there are few relationships more pleasant and happy than that of masters and servants, mistresses and maids, when generous consideration is shown on the one hand and efficient, honourable service rendered on the other, when neither side expects too much nor grants too little.

Again, the tendency of the modern age to regard the responsibilities of individuals as State responsibilities, and especially parental obligations as State duties, is a tendency injurious to home life. As was said in a previous chapter, when parents cannot or will not do their duty in clothing, feeding and educating their children, the State ought to step in and provide for them; but not without also strenuously punishing the parents for the neglect of duty, if that neglect is wilful and avoidable. The interference of the State in the administration of home life ought, both for the sake of home and State, to be as little and infrequent as is consistent with the welfare of both.

No honourably independent parent will lay on another a burden he ought himself to bear,



or look to others to do for him that which he can do for himself, or to pay for him that which he ought himself to pay. The habit of feeding on others is a parasitic habit. Feebleness follows the practice of constant leaning. The essence of the best home life is strenuous independence. The poorest man's home should be for him and his family not an asylum of dependent weaklings, but a castle in which freedom and fortitude are nourished. Every tendency which saps either individual freedom or individual fortitude is hostile to the best home life and besets its development with ever-increasing difficulties.

Some difficulties of home life spring from the very constitution of home itself and are inseparable from it. The facts of closest intimacy and of perpetual association themselves give rise to difficulties. We are not so constantly and necessarily on our guard within the family circle as outside. Those with whom we live see our natural infirmities, our faults and failings, more clearly than strangers. They are with us in all our moods and tempers, and we with them in theirs. We cannot avoid them in the east wind, or when we are out of sorts, or are unaccountably cross. They disturb us when we dislike being disturbed, and ask us to do things we don't want to do when we are disinclined to do them.

And so there are little ruptures, little outbursts of temper. The bridle drops from our lips, and what are called (often mistakenly) home-truths, but are really petulant criticisms, become a source of home difficulty.

Then, too, differences in natural taste and temperament are a common source of home difficulties. No two children in the same family are exactly alike; considering their derivation from the same parents it is extraordinary how altogether unlike they often are. Our brothers and sisters are not infrequently among the last persons we should ourselves have chosen as our most intimate companions, to live with always under the same roof. How often, too, parents would have liked their children different in disposition and ability, and children their parents different in taste and character.

Nor is it uncommon for husbands and wives to discover in each other after marriage dislikes unsuspected before marriage. Then, too, the friends and acquaintances which some members of the family make and bring within the home are not always welcome to the other members. Nor are the recreations and pursuits of each approved by all. These and similar difficulties arise inevitably out of the nature of home life, and can only be overcome by the constant exercise of generous patience,

mutual forbearance, and loving sympathy; by never forgetting that if we have much to put up with from other members of our family they also have much to put up with from us.

Truly one of the best services that home life can render is this training in forbearance, sympathy, and love. The difficulties of home are among the best instruments for development and discipline in character. It may be for the sake of the benefits of this discipline that, in the nature and constitution of home, these difficulties exist and are ineradicable. For if we can earn a good character in our homes, among those who know us most intimately and best, we are not likely to exhibit a bad character elsewhere.

Conduct at home is the surest test of good manners and a good heart. A great many people who are pleasant and affable out of doors are exceedingly unpleasant and disagreeable at home. This is hypocrisy. For at home we are not what to others we seem to be, and to others we seem to be what at home we are not.

Our best manners and best conversation should be reserved for home. Politeness is a domestic not less than a public duty. Husbands should treat their wives with all the grace and tenderness with which wooers treat the wooed; and wives be not less careful to please

their husbands after marriage than before. Wedded life has few difficulties when it is one long honeymoon; as it always ought to be, and often is—the honey ever growing more sweet as it grows less strange. Happiness which depends on novelty for its nutriment is not happiness, but mere sensationalism, often degrading, never ennobling. The only true happiness is that born of unselfishness and fed on sympathy.

Unselfishness and sympathy, these two, are the real conquerors of home difficulties, in little things not less than great. The importance of little things in home life cannot be over-rated. The little rifts in the lute spoil the harmony of home. It is negligence in little things which is commonly the beginning of great home difficulties. Difficulties seldom begin in vast eruptions and cataclysms, but rather in little acts of unkindness, little words of bitterness, little faults of forgetfulness or inattention, little bits of rudeness. Rudeness should be banished from home as a detested foe. In all rudeness there is an element of brutality, whether rudeness of manner or speech. Roughness is sometimes fun, but rudeness is a vice. It is a form of cruelty.

So also is the saying of smart things—or things supposed to be smart, though often merely sour—at another's expense. To

parade one's cleverness, or air one's wits, or show off one's sharpness, by putting pins into other people, especially when they have neither the ability nor the gracelessness to retort, is like children pulling off the wings of flies. There is plenty of good and true fun to be had, both quiet and robustious fun, without inflicting needless pain. Fun is one of the great delights of home, but the heedless pretence of smartness is one cause of its most common difficulties. Cynicism, both etymologically and in fact, is near akin to curishness.

Again, home difficulties often spring from parents' fears of their children. Parental cowardice is far more common than is usually acknowledged. Parental and conjugal despotism is known to be common—the infamous despotism of the strong over the weak, of those who have the power of the purse towards those dependent on them. Such despotism is cowardice in its most cruel form.

But there is another form of cowardice which often creates serious home difficulties—the cowardice which is afraid to correct children, which passes over continuous moodiness, or freaks of temper, or acts of inconsiderateness, or incivilities to servants, or unrestrained manners, or perpetual loud-

ness, or indulgence in constant botherings and bickerings, and whatever spoils the peace or pleasantness of home, without having the courage to put it down. This is a very common kind of parental cowardice. A great writer, long ago, warned his contemporaries against this fear. "Be not afraid of your children," he said.

This ancient warning needs repetition and emphasis in modern days in every rank of life, especially in families where children are precocious. Most young lives are all the better for a little pruning. They develop more beautifully and fruitfully. Some need much bending as well as pruning, else will they grow both crooked and sterile. A child who shows a tendency to masterfulness, to lord it over members of the family or over servants, to give orders without permission, to meddle and interfere in household and domestic affairs, to take the reins and sit on the box of the family coach, shutting the elder members inside, should have the tendency eradicated as soon as it manifests itself. Short-sighted parents laugh at this tendency in the bud, and treat it as a joke, mistaking precocity for cleverness, and presumption for the promise of power, but when the bud unfolds they find the flower far from beautiful and the fruit far from sweet.

In the interests of the child's happiness, as well as to avoid home difficulties in the future, early faults should not, through feeble fear, be passed over. Neither among the poor nor the rich should children be suffered to forget that they are children in their parents' house; while on the other hand it is of the greatest moment that parents should remember that their children do not always continue in infancy; that they *do* actually grow up into men and women, and that as soon as possible fatherhood ought to mellow into elder brotherhood, and motherhood into elder sisterhood. But through every age fathers ought to see to it that mothers are treated with dutiful homage and respectful courtesy.

A good father resents all derelictions of duty to the mother more than towards himself. Many a widow's heart has been pierced through with sorrows in her lonely years by the disrespect of her children owing to the cowardice of her husband during his lifetime in joining with them in arrogant laughter against her, or in not visiting intentional discourtesies with condign punishment.

Of course, in the brightest and happiest families there are times when the laugh, in jocund innocence and kindly mirth, is turned each against each in merry turn, but such laughter is the laughter of free and trustful

love, and not that of cowardly, overbearing cynicism. Good as distinct from bad laughter never creates difficulties at home, but is one of the sunniest methods of removing them.

Among the difficulties of home life dulness is one of the worst. Dulness is hateful, particularly to the young. It is the vice of dulness which has made possible the saying, "Be good and you cannot be happy." The saying is fundamentally false, yet, owing to the frequent dulness of the good, partly true. Bright goodness is true happiness, but dull goodness a source of much unhappiness and not a little immorality.

However dull duty is it ought to be done, but neither duty nor anything else should be allowed to be more dull than is absolutely unavoidable. Dulness is the root of many evils. It is one of the causes of the depopulation of rural districts and the over-crowding of towns. It is a great enemy of home life. Everything at home should be made as fresh and bright and interesting as can be. Husbands should remember when they come home of an evening to tell their wives of any matters of interest which have occurred to them during the day, and wives also to tell their husbands.

Only it should not be forgotten that in home life, as in other matters, there is a time for



everything, and everything ought to be done at its own time. To do the right thing at the wrong time is almost as bad as doing the wrong thing. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent, a time for making a request and a time to refrain from making it, a time to work and a time to play, a time for recreation and a time for repose, a time for telling one's troubles and a time for keeping them a little longer to oneself.

Many home difficulties are caused by saying things necessary to be said, and doing things right to be done, but saying and doing them out of season. Just as things eaten out of season have to be dearly paid for, so things said and done out of season have often to be paid for very dearly in loss of temper and other evil results. There are many things for which there is never a right time. It is never the right time to be a bore.

At home every effort should be made to avoid dullness, and particularly dullness for children. Children need not only playthings but a playful atmosphere, an atmosphere warm and light and bright. The delights of life without discipline are deadly. They poison by their sweetness. And the discipline of life without delights is deadly also. Its acidity is fatal.

One of the chief delights of children is the

delight of doing things. They love to think they are being useful. You can rarely give a little child a greater pleasure than by letting it do something for you, something which it fancies of importance. It is a good thing to encourage children in the fancy of their own importance, if the importance runs in the direction of helping others, being of service, being kind. Children love running about. Let them fetch things for you as often as possible—a father's stick or a mother's cloak; let them go on errands, carry little parcels, open and shut doors for people leaving the room, anything and everything which pleases or interests them.

Games, sports, recreations, pleasant chats, amusing books, riddles, hobbies, and the like, will often smooth down the difficulties of home life. And let it not be forgotten that one of the best amusements for children is employment in some little work of usefulness for others, so long as the work is not imposed as a task, but voluntarily undertaken as a pleasure.

Another great difficulty in home life is caused by drifting. Purposeless lives are never happy lives. Wretched in themselves, they are prolific in wretchedness for others. A life without an object is a ship without a helm. It was a good law of the ancient Jews that every male child, of whatever rank, should

learn a trade. A law like this in England to-day would probably do more good than all collectivist and socialistic schemes put together. Tradelessness is a great curse; the cause of a whole host of moral as well as economical evils. In some circles it is the fashion to look down upon trade, while in truth the knowledge, if not also the pursuit, of some trade might prove the salvation of the members of the circle which looks down on it.

On the other hand, in the pathetic hosts of unemployed poor the number of skilled labourers is exceedingly few. The unemployed are not only without employment, they are also, as a rule, without a trade in which they can be employed. In some form or other, modified to meet modern requirements, we need a resuscitation of the system of apprenticeship. At any rate it is imperative to check the tendency in human life to driftage. It is through drifting that so much unhappiness is caused both in the ranks of poor and rich alike—the poor drift into suffering and squalor, and the rich into aimless, vicious indolence.

In home life the consequences of drifting sometimes lead to difficulties practically insufferable. The drifters become a weary load to the family, and not infrequently a cause of distress and shame. Every effort, therefore, should be made to give definite

direction to the lives both of boys and girls from their earliest years. Not only should inspiring ideals be set before them, but they should be taught that drifting through life is misery and sin.

God never means anybody to go dawdling through the world. He Himself, we may reverently say, is always doing something for somebody. And when He brings a life into the world, He intends something to be done by, something to be made of, that life. There is nothing more ungodlike than idleness and purposelessness. With exceeding few exceptions, every human being born into the world is endowed with some special capacity for some kind of work. And it is parents' duty to seek for this special capacity in each of their children, to instigate and encourage their children to find the capacity in themselves, and to bend their minds and wills to its development. Some sort of labour, either mental or manual (for workers with the mind are as truly working men as workers with the hand), every young person should set himself or herself to do, whether they depend for their livelihood on the work or not.

Bees kill the drones in their hives. In human homes it is the drones which kill the sweetest joys. All education, from the lowest to the highest, should train the will to

work as well as the head to know. What do you mean to be? what do you mean to do? are questions which parents and teachers should frequently put to children, and teach children to put to themselves and to each other. Ignorance is a great evil, but knowledge without purpose is an evil also.

Moreover, in the choice of a purpose or career in life parents have no right to force their children to follow their own trade or profession. Let children freely choose their calling for themselves. Parents ought honestly to put before their children the *pros* and *cons* of the various callings in life, but having done that let them not constrain their children against their will in any particular direction. Any calling, honourably chosen and pursued, is better than no calling. We each have to live our own life. Nobody can live our life for us, and it is best we should live it in our own way, so long as that way is reasonable in itself and not detrimental to others.

Girls, like boys, should be encouraged to have clear aims in life. Girls are not meant to be dolls any more than boys are meant to be drones. It is quite true that the highest vocation in life for a woman is a pure marriage, with the attendant duties of wifehood and motherhood. But suitable oppor-

tunities for this vocation are not offered to all women. All women, therefore, ought to have other resources provided for them, other high aims and useful purposes set before them. The possession of these resources may preserve them from entering into undesirable marriages, from drifting aimlessly through life if unmarried; it will also enable them to add to the happiness of their homes if married.

Abundance of individual resources, and the pursuit of definite occupations and ideals, would surmount many home difficulties which without their aid will be found insurmountable.

These, then, are some of the difficulties of home life. The list might easily be prolonged. In no two homes probably are the difficulties exactly identical. But in all homes alike the difficulties are either removable or irremovable. When they are altogether irremovable they may often be alleviated by patience and gentleness. Where there is no remedy, courage to endure remains to the brave, and prayer for help from on high is a never-failing strength to the believing.

But a far greater part of our home difficulties than we allow ourselves to acknowledge, even to ourselves, are of our own making, and are removable by ourselves if we resolutely determine on the endeavour. By consider-

ateness, by cheerfulness, by the frank confession of our faults, by never saying or doing at home to others what we would not have them say or do to us, by homage to duty and the constant remembrance of the sacred character of all family relationships, most of the stumbling-blocks in the way of home delights would be rolled away, and homes now scarcely less dreary than sepulchres would become radiant as the abodes of angels.

## CHAPTER VII

### HOME DELIGHTS

As the difficulties of home life are often of our own making, so the delights of home are often spoiled by our own marring. It is on ourselves more than on all besides that our home delights depend. The quality of domestic delight, like that of genuine happiness, is largely a personal product. It grows most richly from within, and cannot be superimposed from without so as to satisfy the heart. External circumstances, indeed, can greatly interfere with happiness — miserable penury, cruel conduct, the faithlessness of friends, uncongenial employment, disappointed hopes, blighted love, bodily infirmity, the voids of bereavement, the sorrows and sufferings of those we love, the bitter yoke of some bondage that cannot be thrown off — these, and such as these, are great obstacles to complete happiness, sources of much unhappiness.

Yet that man is never wholly unhappy whose ways are upright, whose conscience is void of offence, who has resources within him-



self, and whose mind is stayed in child-like trust on God. Favourable circumstances and the love of others can assist in making us happy in a very large degree; but to depend altogether for our happiness on outside supplies is to store the waters of life in leaking cisterns. Nothing can make those deeply happy who do not find their first happiness within, nothing can strip those bare of it who do not depend for it entirely on others.

So also is it with the delights of home. Favourable circumstances may largely increase those delights, and unfavourable circumstances largely diminish them, but no outward circumstances, however adverse, can altogether deprive home of those delights which spring from itself, nor can outward circumstances, however prosperous, make any home intensely delightful whose delights depend on those circumstances.

There is a very true sense in which every home should be like a self-sustaining island of delights, not selfishly cutting itself off from all neighbouring islands, but rather conveying joys to them, and receiving from them joys for itself, yet capable of supplying itself with self-produced joys of its own whenever the means of communication with the other islands is for a season cut off. In order to secure for ourselves a store of home delights

in days of darkness and storm as well as of light and calm, the structure of our home should be so built and furnished that its delights should be beyond peril, however fiercely the winds and rains may beat.

The prime condition of the security of home delights is that marriage should rest on its only true foundation, which is pure and mutual love hallowed by the blessing of God. There is no sure hope of home delights where marriages are made for reasons lower than love and without the approval of God. God and His most blessed angel, Love, must reign supreme, else will our home delights be most precarious. But where the reverent fear of God and mutual love are, there also will be delights beautiful and many as flowers of a meadow in May.

Then, too, delight never flourishes divorced from duty. Devotion to duty is a perennial fountain of delight. Delight flows forth from it like a river, broad, deep, unfailling. The pursuit of selfish pleasure is destructive of true delight. Selfish pleasure may yield a succession of stimulating sensations, but each sensation grows weaker and needs more stimulus than the one before. But the delight in duty is like the light of the sun which grows from earliest dawn brighter and brighter to perfect day. It is in the glad fulfilment of home

duties that home delights are most abundantly found.

One of the greatest of home delights is the society and training of children. Cynics have said that "children are a certain source of disappointment and a doubtful source of happiness." But in all ages cynicism has said things more paradoxical than true, more brilliant in appearance than real in fact. No doubt there are children and children, as there are parents and parents. Some parents are a source of great unhappiness to their children, as some children are a great bitterness to their parents. But as a rule parents who do their duty will find delight in their children.

There are sad exceptions (often unaccountable to our limited knowledge, though perhaps easily accounted for if only we knew all things), but for all the purposes of guidance in conduct the law holds good that as the twig is bent the tree inclines, and if by force of parental precept and pattern the wills of children are bent before the shrine of duty their lives will be a tree of delight to their parents, not always of agreement in opinion or harmony in action, but of inward gratification and joy. As the crown of children is good parents, so to parents good children are a constant delight.

When children are a burden the most common cause of their burdensomeness (assuming a proper supply of material needs) is either the selfishness of the parents or the faulty training of the children. Selfish parents are a worse burden to their children than their children are to them. Selfish people have no right to marry. For the very essence of married happiness is unselfishness. If both the married persons are selfish then each is a worry and a load to the other; if only one is selfish, then the other is a slave. In no relationship of married life can there be mutual delight apart from mutual unselfishness.

Selfish parents are a great misery to their children, and selfish children to their parents. If children are to enjoy delights and be delightful, parents must train both themselves and their children in unselfishness. The example of the parent is a necessary part of the training of the child if when the child is old it is not to depart from its parents' training. Training is a slow process. All attempts at forcing children suddenly out of faults or into virtues are contrary to Nature. Forced children, whether intellectually or morally forced, are unnatural and feeble children. In after years they droop and fade in life's strong and open air. Moral precocity is often an un-

promising sign in children. It seldom ripens into rich and full-grown fruits.

Don't expect that your children will have no faults. Don't pretend to other people that your brood are all swans. Sooner or later their cackle may betray them. Be sure and let your children see, and occasionally also feel, that you see their faults, only don't be impatient about them. So long as you know they are really trying to conquer their faults, give them plenty of time. Let them alone. Be cheerful over their failures.

Don't try to build a character, any more than a city, in a day. All quick building is jerry-building. Its ruin is as quick as its rise. Jerry-building in morals is the worst form of jerry-building. Children who are quickly made good quickly fall from goodness. Be content with the growth of goodness in your children, however slow, if so be it is constant. The spectacle of children's growth in goodness is one of home's dearest delights, and not infrequently it happens that the more unpromising the beginning of the growth, the more delightful is its end.

Let children grow. No counsel is more needed by parents, especially mothers, in their sweet anxiety and yearning for their children, than this. Few causes tell more direfully against the permanence of home delights than

pushing children forward impatiently and over-anxiously, either in knowledge or goodness. There need be little solicitude about a child's future if it is daily growing. Slowly perhaps yet steadily. Artificial and excessive stimulation makes children conscious of their lack of strength, whereas ever so little natural progress makes them gradually more sure of themselves.

And be not penurious in praise of your children when you see them doing their best. Praise is better than punishment, whenever it can be justly bestowed. Punishment is necessary for the arrest of downward tendencies, but praise is a strong encouragement to upward effort. You cannot win your children's confidence if you are niggardly in well-earned praise, and the winning of children's confidence is one of the deepest joys of parenthood.

Let your children see your joy when they please you, as well as your grief when they do things displeasing, then will they try to grieve you less and please you more. Your lives will be drawn into nearer touch and sweeter harmony with theirs, only do not force confidence any more than character. True confidence is a tender and sensitive plant, very shy in unfolding its wonders and glorious flowers. Give it time, dear parents, give it time, or you may lose its delights for ever.

Again, the delights of home depend not only on the mutual love of husbands and wives, and on the devotion of parents to their children, and the confidence of children in their parents, but on the gentleness and courtesy of children to each other, and where there are servants to the servants also. Little kindnesses and little courtesies are as the oil in the wheels of home life, or as the pleasant rays of the sun in a room that might otherwise be sombre.

There are many homes governed on high principles yet not happy, because the austere people who govern them seem to think that virtue cannot be kept white beneath the level of perpetual snow. The air in these homes is always chill, often icy. Even in sunshine their silence is like that of Alpine peaks, and when the winds blow they bite most bitterly. Children trained in these homes are scarcely ever like children. They seem born altogether too big, and grow old without ever being young. Sometimes as the result of this stern upbringing they are simply made naughty, hardly ever made nice.

Now life ought to be nice, especially for young children, and nice without being naughty. It is the fault of the good, their morosity and cheerlessness, their gloom and unattractiveness, that niceness comes in so

many young minds to be associated with naughtiness and dissociated from goodness. One of the very first duties of the good is to be nice and pleasant, that in them goodness may be attractive. From their earliest years children should be taught to be nice to one another, pleasant and good-humoured, cheerful and courteous, to delight in each other's delights as well as to sympathise with each other's trials.

Morosity, which is so often the enemy of delight in good and religious homes, is generally the result of lack of humour. Humour is one of the greatest saviours of home delights. Farce is better than nothing, if you can get nothing better than farce, but wit is better than farce, and better than wit is humour. Humour is a lively and picturesque sense both of the true proportion of things and of the real disproportion of their commonplace proportion. It is the enemy of bungling and worry, the friend of tact and gladness. Wit seems to be more of the head, humour of the heart. At any rate, witty people are often selfish and hard, whereas the rule is for the humorous to be sympathetic and generous. Wit often pleases itself through causing pain, humour is pleasing in itself and needs no dark background to set off its electric splendours. The laughter of wit is loud and metallic, of humour



lambent and gracious. At least so it has often seemed to me.

But, however this may be, it is certain that the cultivation of the sense of humour should be part of children's education, especially at home. In many children the sense of humour is not perhaps a very strong sense by nature, but Nature is not so cruel as to bring many children into the world without at least some spark or spice of it. And great pains should be taken to foment and feed the spark, not to quench or smother it, for a well-disciplined, well-nourished humour is 'a source of one of life's most precious, as well as most pleasing, possessions.

Again, if we really value the delights of home we must be ever on the watch against the least approach to favouritism. Spoiled children are great despoilers of home delights. To spoil a child is to sin against it. The coat of many colours is an incentive to vanity in the wearer, and to envy in the beholders; it also brings the grey hairs of the giver down in sorrow to the grave. The pets of children are often troublesome and unpleasant, but never so unpleasant and troublesome as children who themselves are pets. The peril of petting is especially dangerous in the case of an only child, and should be diligently warded off by the weapons of common sense and constant

prayer. An only child should have plenty of companions of its own age, and always be discouraged from thinking or acting as if older than it is.

In large families it is inevitable that some should be less winsome or more attractive than others, but parents are nursing scorpions in their hearts when they show preference or partiality among their children because of superior beauty, or greater talents, or mere inborn graces as distinct from perseverance in duty and the determined exercise of moral virtues. Besides, the plain and the commonplace and the weak are painfully self-conscious of their defects and disadvantages, and it should be the delight of all the family to make up, as far as possible, by gentleness and playfulness, by courtesy and sympathy, for the advantages which have been denied by Nature.

It is among the greatest delights of home that here at least defects of Nature are no barriers to love. In the rough, cold world outside defects are disadvantages. But at home the dwarf ought to be able to forget he is a dwarf and the cripple he is a cripple. Home can help to give eyes to the blind, and ears to the deaf, and a tongue to the dumb. At home the patient sufferer is often the angel of the house, the inspirer of sympathy, the

wan ministrant of harmonious peace, in whose presence, and for whose sake, all discords are gladly stifled.

At home a most strange thing often happens. For home's deepest delights often spring forth, not from bright conversations or joyous amusements, but from clouds of sorrow bursting into showers of sympathy, followed by the sunshine of thankfulness. When the world turns its back on us, in good homes a sweet welcome remains. When the world misunderstands and misrepresents us, at home, if home be truly home, we are still believed in and understood.

In happy early years a good home is sweet to the child, and in the troubled weary years of declining life it is still a delight, often a delight chastened with sad and sorrowful memories, yet the abode of peace and love in which we can quietly wait till the final summons calls us away.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HOME RELIGION

OF all home delights none are comparable to those of religion. Home religion is the most simple, as well as the most ancient, of all religions. It is a fact replete with significance that when all others forsook the crucified Lord, His mother and the disciple who had been as a son, and probably the women with whom He had made His home at Bethany, remained true and faithful. Some of the last words from the Cross were home words, the dear, sweet words, mother and son. The gift of the dying Christ to His mother was the gift of a home. And after the Day of Pentecost, when the religion of the risen Lord began to spread by the power of the Holy Ghost, the church in the house was among the earliest forms it took. Other forms of churches—Catholic, provincial, national, denominational—have their proper use and scope, but not a scope or use rightly fulfilled by the depression or extinction of the church in the house.

The church in the house is one of the chief supports of all other churches. As personal

devotion is both the seed and fruit of public religion, so ought public religion to be both the prop and the product of home religion. Public religion has grievously neglected the nurture of home religion, both to its own exceeding loss and the decay of home religion.

One of the greatest misfortunes which in the course of its history has befallen Christianity is that for so long a period, in the largest of its regions—the Latin region—the direction of its doctrines and the shaping of its ceremonies were exclusively in the power of unmarried persons—persons whose only home was the Church. If all the Popes, or even many of them, had been married men, as St. Peter was, the course of Latin Christianity would have been entirely changed. For one thing, it would have kept more closely to the Bible, of which the majority of the writers were married men. When the battle of celibacy was won by the papacy the gates of the subsequent aberrations in Roman religion were flung open. The forbidding the clergy to marry was one of the most false of all the false steps in Latin Christianity.

It would not be difficult to trace a close connection between this false step and the many false teachings which have succeeded it. Certainly no assemblage of married men would ever have pronounced the decree of in-

fallibility. Marriage would at least have saved any clerical council from plunging into such an abyss.

One of the most deadly results of lodging ecclesiastical power and leaving religious doctrine in the hands of celibate persons is seen in its effect on home religion. Persons, compulsorily celibate, whether men or women, having no husbands or wives, and no natural homes, are wedded to the Church, and the Church, not the home, becomes their dominant interest. Home religion is depressed, church religion exalted. Fathers of families are not encouraged to be priests in their own households. Little children are trained to confess their faults to the priests, such confessions being wrongly held of greater value than confessions to parents. The confessional is even pushed between husbands and wives.

Thus what celibate clergy lose in domestic affections they seek to supply by ecclesiastical pretensions. Having no homes of their own they become largely lords of the homes of others. The claims of our blessed Lord to personal precedence in all human relationships are ingeniously perverted into ecclesiastical claims, seldom distinguishable from the claims of superstition. Fathers and mothers are over-ruled that convents may be replenished, and conversions to "the Church"

are held sufficient excuse for breaking up the unity and for not acknowledging the supremacy of home.

The best of all remedies for these exorbitant and anti-Scriptural claims of a celibate clergy is the simple earnest practice of home religion. As superstition won the day when the priesthood became compulsorily celibate, so will Christianity regain its influence when every father becomes priest and every mother lady superior in their own homes. It was a true instinct which determined Luther to marry, notwithstanding the malevolent misrepresentations which he foresaw would attend the step. Next to his translation of the Bible his marriage was his stoutest defiance of hierarchical autocracy.

Nothing can establish true religion on the earth so long as home religion is neglected. Irreligious children rarely spring from religious homes. When the living, personal Christ is enthroned in the family circle and worshipped at the family altar, superstition and impiety are relegated to banishment. When parents complain of the neglect or absence of religion in their children, may not the fault be sometimes, often even largely, their own? Unless in conversation and conduct, in praise and prayer, parents pay due honour to religion at home, is it strange their

children should lightly esteem religion away from home? When it is religiously well with the father, and religiously well with the mother, it is also as a rule religiously well with the child.

Sometimes, indeed, it happens that the children of the irreligious are religious, and of the religious irreligious, but the rule is the other way. Children accustomed to breathe the atmosphere of religion at home, so long as it is not an over-stimulating, over-heated atmosphere, generally find themselves unable to live without that atmosphere in after days.

As those who have been nurtured in homes of courtesy and culture can seldom be happy in the society of the vulgar and ignorant, so those who in childhood have been familiarised with the ideals and duties, the promises and practice, the beauty and peace of religion, can seldom be happy in the society of the worldly and irreverent. As home religion is the sweetest of all joys in the home, so is it the strongest of all protections away from home.

The very idea of home in its sweetest, truest meaning is a Christian idea. The Christian religion is fundamentally a home religion. Other religions have nourished family institutions, have encouraged, even to exaggeration, reverence for ancestors, have greatly fostered the obligations attached to domestic



relationships, but the deep, tender, sacred thoughts and feelings which Christendom associates with ideal homes are a blessed growth outspringing from the life and work of our divine and domestic Lord.

Our Lord Jesus was as characteristically domestic as essentially divine. The simplicity, industry and loveliness of His home life at Nazareth was a great factor in the redemption of mankind. In His ministerial teachings, when He desired to express the ineffable blessings of obedience to the will of God, He expressed them in terms of domestic relationship. "Whosoever shall do the will of God," He said, "the same is my brother and sister and mother." One of His sternest condemnations of the Pharisees was poured on their practice of exalting the sacrifices made under the name of Corban for their public religion at the cost of neglecting domestic duties and domestic obligations.

Every domestic relationship was esteemed by our Lord as a religious relationship. Marriage, parenthood, sonship, brotherhood, all these were facts before His coming. But He put new meaning into the facts, new power, new beauty, new holiness. He invested all the charities of home with the sanctities of religion. Marriage grew into the mirror of the relationship between Himself and His

Church. Parenthood developed from a physical relationship into a relationship "in the Lord." Sonship was no longer a bondage of the flesh merely, but an obedience of the will subjugated by reverent love.

Trained in Christian brotherhood at home, the disciples of Jesus Christ gradually learned the meaning of the larger brotherhood of men. Thus in Christ the home was transfigured into something far higher and nobler than a civic institution. It became the corner-stone of the commonwealth, the very life-blood of social purity and social felicity, the strongest and sweetest of all human relationships. In Him home was uplifted into a mystical, heavenly, divine institution. For Christians, therefore, who realise that their home is the creation of the Christ, gratitude to Him for this good and perfect gift should compel them, apart from all other reasons, to erect His altar on their hearths.

Sometimes, indeed, the avocations and duties of dwellers in poor homes, the material conditions of these homes, are often a great hindrance to family worship. Daily family prayers in them are generally an impossibility. But there is no home so simple and humble that now and again the family may not read God's word together, pray together, and even sing together. No father of a family is so

poor but that if his heart is bent on it he may not at times act as priest in his own home, no mother so careworn but that at times she may place her loving hands on the heads of her children kneeling at her knees. Who that has read "The Cottar's Saturday Night" can doubt this? Those parents who have not the command of words of their own in which to pray can read from simple books some simple family prayers, or, failing these, can say at least the Lord's Prayer together with their children. In home religion simplicity is best, simplicity in words, simplicity in forms.

Above all things the religion of home should be the religion of daily words and daily deeds, the religion of reverence for all things beautiful, pure and good, the religion of a bright and natural piety, the religion of kindness and courtesy, the religion whose root is love and whose fruit is shown in life. For at home we must really love one another and live for one another, else will our home religion be felt to be a pretence. This is one of the great results of home religion. Praying together implies living together in the spirit of our prayers, for unless we try to live as we pray our prayers will be hindered.

Home religion is thus the surest protector of home love. Holy habits at home are the strongest bulwark against the temptations of

the world. When home is beautiful and holy in spirit, and the precepts of religion brightly shine through home life in forbearance, patience, sympathy, devotion, then is home ever sweet, most sweet.

Home religion has a longer history than any other religion. The patriarchs came before the priests. "The God of our fathers" is one of the most beautiful of all the names by which the Creator can be known to His creatures. Apostolic succession is a grand attribute of the church Catholic—so long as it is succession in truth and purity as well as by imposition of hands—but patriarchal succession is also a grand attribute of the Church domestic. To have descended from a long line of simple and pious ancestors, ancestors who have passed into Paradise, ancestors who will welcome us as their spiritual descendants when our turn shall come to follow through the gates of Death—this is a glorious lineage. And it is a glorious lineage with an even more glorious hope set before it. No religion can look farther backward or farther forward than home religion.

"My boast is not that I derive my birth  
From loins enthroned or rulers of the earth ;  
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,  
The child of parents passed into the skies."

In home religion angels play a wondrous

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part—the angels of those whom we have loved long since and lost awhile. In domestic worship many angels are present. Around the family altar gather the unseen spirits of fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, children. As you kneel by the old arm-chair angel hosts are with you, felt though not heard, silent yet very real. A great cloud of loving witnesses encompasses the few and simple worshippers at the family altar. And when Death makes new breaches, leaves fresh voids, in the family circle, the consolations of home religion are strong and sweet consolations, bright with the blessed hope that those who have left us behind on earth will be the first to receive us into everlasting habitations.

The joy and the power of home religion are great beyond expression. Public worship is of immense value. It is the public recognition of God, the public homage due to Him. It is also that assembling of ourselves together for united prayer and praise, for the reception of His holy word and sacraments, which God has bidden us not to forsake, both on account of His glory and our good.

Yet in public worship there are hindrances from which domestic worship is free—hindrances caused by the inveterate tendency of public worship to depart from simplicity in both doctrine and ordinances. It is this

departure from the simplicity and the purity of the New Testament which is responsible more than all besides for modern indifference to religion and the growing neglect of its ordinances. The remedy for this neglect, the cure for this indifference, lies, first of all, in the revival of home religion.

In home religion simplicity and purity have free course. In home religion there is no room for the display either of doubtful ceremonial or party eloquence. Ecclesiastical temptations have no foothold in home religion. The worshippers at the family altar know each other intimately. All pretences are speedily uncovered in home life, not omitting pretences in religion. Home religion must be a reality or it cannot long endure as a religion at all. It is just these attributes of simplicity and reality which are the strength and blessedness of home religion.

“Sweet is the smile of home . the mutual look

When hearts are of each other sure ;

Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook,  
The haunt of all affections pure.”

Every true home is like a little heaven on earth, whether poor and humble, or rich and stately. But all true heavens are thrones on which God sits. There can be no heaven where God is not. Neither can any home be a heaven unless it be the house and temple

of God. Most happy of all homes are those in which God most delights to dwell, homes in which religion is both worship and work, devotion and duty, mutual forbearance, frank acknowledgment and free pardon for daily faults, mutual help in all difficulties, mutual sympathy in all sorrows, mutual gladness in all joys, and brooding over all, with white and shining wings, the blessed spirit of a deathless love. When home life is the life of each for all, and the life of all in God, then is home on earth a foretaste of heaven, and after death heaven is an eternal home.







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